

**2024**  
**OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES**  
**OF THE**  
**NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE**



**Roger Goodell, Commissioner**

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“2024 NFL Rulebook”

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## 2024 Rules Changes

### Rule-Section-Article

Rule 6	Creates a new form of a kickoff play.
12-2-18	Prohibits the “hip-drop” tackling technique.
14-5-2	Allows for an enforcement of a major foul by the offense prior to a change of possession in a situation where there are fouls by both teams.
15-1-1	Provides a team with a third challenge if successful on at least one of its challenges.
15-3-3	Adds a ruling of a passer down by contact or out of bounds before throwing a pass as a reviewable play.
15-3-9	Allows for a replay review when there is clear and obvious video evidence that the game clock expired before any snap.

## **PREFACE**

This edition of the Official Playing Rules of the National Football League contains all current rules governing the playing of professional football that are in effect for the 2024 NFL season. Member clubs of the League may amend the rules from time to time, pursuant to the applicable voting procedures of the NFL Constitution and Bylaws.

Any intra-League dispute or call for interpretation in connection with these rules will be decided by the Commissioner of the League, whose ruling will be final.

Because inter-conference games are played throughout the preseason, regular season, and postseason in the NFL, all rules contained in this book apply uniformly to both the American and National Football Conferences.

Where the word “illegal” appears in this rule book, it is an institutional term of art pertaining strictly to actions that violate NFL playing rules. It is not meant to connote illegality under any public law or the rules or regulations of any other organization.

The word “flagrant,” when used here to describe an action by a player, is meant to indicate that the degree of a violation of the rules—usually a personal foul or unnecessary roughness—is extremely objectionable, conspicuous, unnecessary, avoidable, or gratuitous. “Flagrant” in these rules does not necessarily imply malice on the part of the fouling player or an intention to injure an opponent.



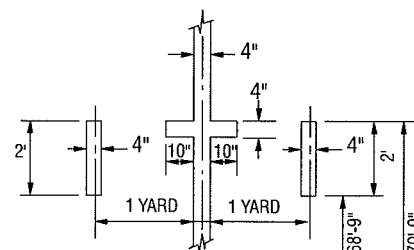
# Field Markings

1. The playing field will be rimmed by a solid white border six feet wide along the end lines and sidelines. There will be an additional broken yellow line nine feet farther outside this border along each sideline in the non-bench areas, and such broken line will be continued at an angle from each 25-yard line and pass behind the bench area (all benches a minimum of 30 feet back from the sidelines) at a distance of six feet. In each end zone, this broken yellow line is six feet from the solid white border. These yellow broken lines are to be eight inches wide and two feet long with a space of one foot between them.

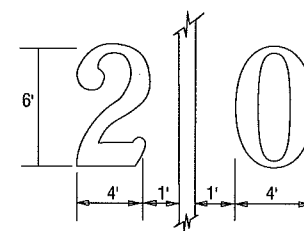
In addition, within each bench area, a solid yellow line six feet behind the solid border will delineate a special area for coaches, behind which all players, except one player who is charting the game, must remain. Furthermore, a broken white line four inches wide and four feet long with a space of two-foot intervals will be marked three feet inside the nine-foot restriction line on the sideline, extending to meet the existing yellow broken line six feet behind both end zones and at each television box outside the bench area.

2. All lines are to be four inches wide, with the exception of the goal line and yellow lines, which are to be eight inches wide. Tolerance of line widths is plus one-fourth inch.
3. All line work is to be laid out to dimensions shown on the plan with a tolerance of plus one-fourth inch. All lines are straight.
4. All boundary lines, goal lines, and marked yard lines are to be continuous lines.
5. The four intersections of goal lines and sidelines must be marked at inside corners of the end zone and the goal line by pylons. Pylons must be placed at inside edges of white lines and should not touch the surface of the actual playing field itself.
6. All lines are to be marked with a material that is not injurious to eyes or skin.
7. No benches or rigid fixtures should be nearer than 10 yards from the sidelines. If space permits, they may be further back.
8. Player benches can be situated anywhere between respective 30-yard lines. Where possible, a continuation of the dotted yellow line is to extend from the 25-yard lines to a point six feet behind the player benches thereby enclosing this area.
9. A white arrow is to be placed on the ground adjacent to the top portion of each number (with the exception of the 50) with the point formed by the two longer sides pointing toward the goal line. The two longer sides measure 36 inches each, while the side measures 18 inches. The 18-inch crossfield side is to start 15 inches below the top, and 6 inches from the goalward edge of each outer number (except the 50).
10. The location of the inbounds lines is 70'9" for professional football, 60'0" for college football. On fields used primarily by the NFL, the professional inbounds lines should be 4 inches wide by 2 feet long. Alternate college lines, if they are to be included, should be 4 inches wide by 1 foot long.
11. Care must be exercised in any end zone marking, decoration, or club identification at the 50-yard line, that said marks or decorations do not in any way cause confusion as to delineation of goal lines, sidelines, and end lines. Such markings or decorations must be approved by the Commissioner.

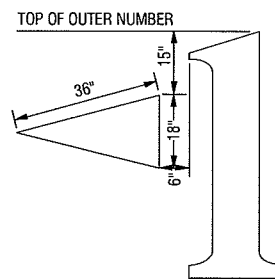
## Inbound Yard Markers



## Dimensions for Numerals on the Playing Field



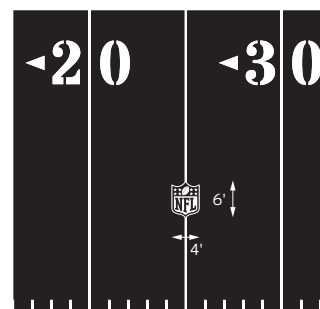
## Dimensions for the Directional Arrows



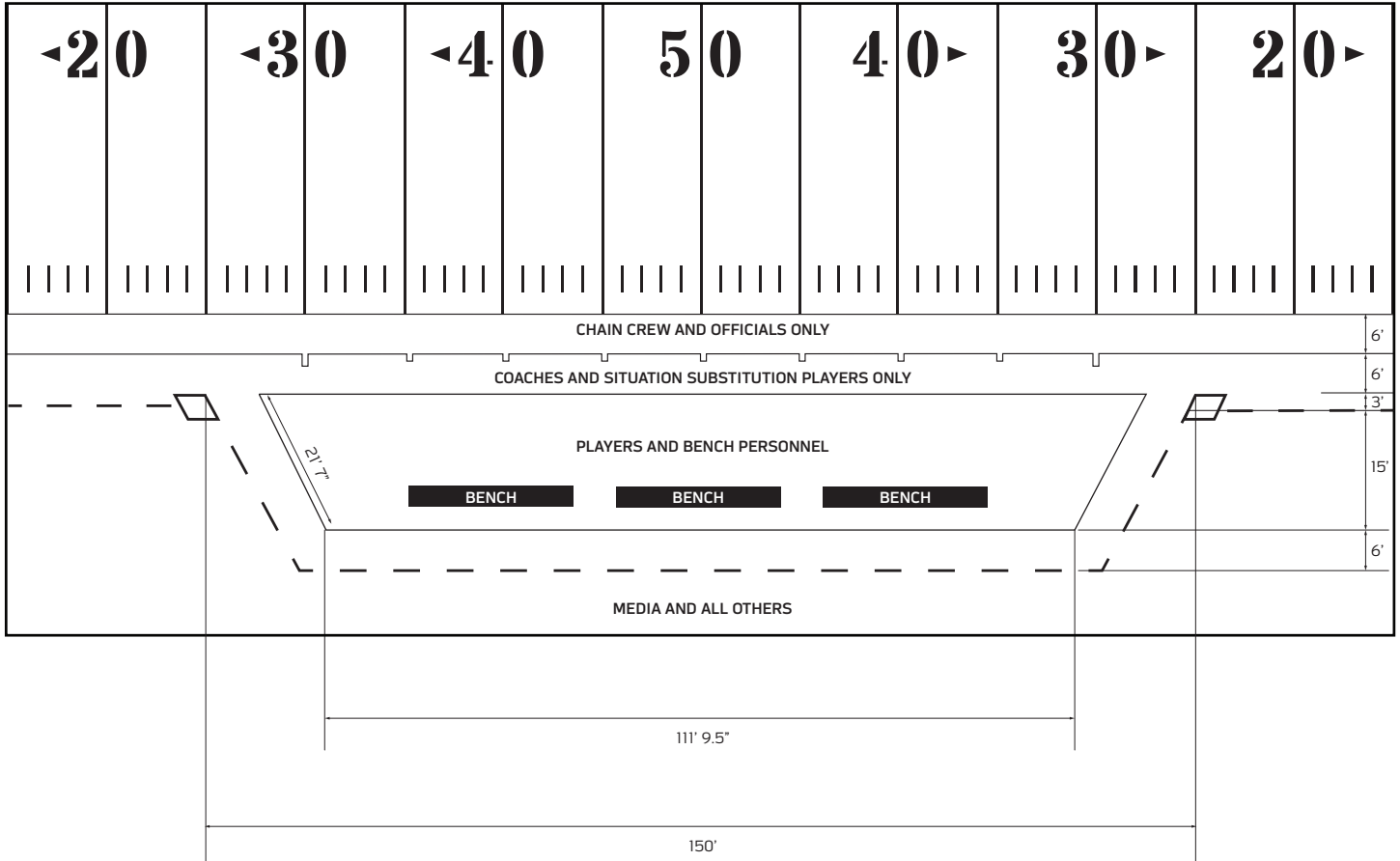
## Priority Diamond



## NFL Shield at 25's



## NFL BENCH AREA SHOWING RESTRICTING ZONES



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# RULE 1 THE FIELD

## SECTION 1 DIMENSIONS

**ARTICLE 1. PLAYING LINES.** The game shall be played upon a rectangular field, 360 feet in length and 160 feet in width. The lines at each end of the field are termed end lines. Those on each side are termed sidelines. Goal lines shall be established in the field 10 yards from and parallel to each end line. The area bounded by goal lines and sidelines is known as the field of play. The surface of the entire field of play must be a League-approved shade of green. The areas bounded by goal lines, end lines, and sidelines are known as the end zones.

The areas bounded by goal lines and lines parallel to, and 70 feet 9 inches inbounds, from each sideline, are known as the side zones. The lines parallel to sidelines are termed inbound lines. The end lines and the sidelines are also termed boundary lines.

### ARTICLE 2. FIELD.

The field includes the field of play and the end zones. The field will be rimmed by a solid white border a minimum of 6 feet wide along the end lines and sidelines. An additional broken limit line 6 feet further outside this border is to encompass the field in the non-bench areas, and such broken line will be continued at an angle from each 25-yard line and pass behind the bench areas (all benches a minimum 30 feet back from the sidelines). In addition, within each bench area, a yellow line 6 feet behind the solid white border will delineate a special area for coaches, behind which all players, except one player charting the game, must remain. If a club's solid white border is a minimum of 12 feet wide, there is no requirement that the broken restraining line also be added in the non-bench areas. However, the appropriate yellow line described above must be clearly marked within the bench areas.

In special circumstances (for example, an artificial surface in a multi-purpose stadium) and subject to prior approval from the League Office, a club may omit the 6-foot solid white border during the preseason or later period while football overlaps with another sport, and substitute a single 4-inch white line at what normally would be the outer limit of the solid border (6 feet from the sidelines).

## SECTION 2 MARKINGS

**ARTICLE 1. LINE MARKINGS.** At intervals of 5 yards, yard lines (3-11-9) parallel to the goal lines shall be marked in the field of play. These lines are to stop 8 inches short of the 6-foot solid border. The 4-inch wide yard lines are to be extended 4 inches beyond the white 6-foot border along the sidelines. Each of these lines shall be intersected at right angles by short lines 70 feet, 9 inches long (23 yards, 1 foot, 9 inches) in from each side to indicate inbound lines.

**ARTICLE 2. INBOUND LINES.** In line with the inbound lines there shall be marks at 1-yard intervals between each distance of 5 yards for the full length of the field. These lines are to begin 8 inches from the 6-foot solid border and are to measure 2 feet in length.

Bottoms of numbers indicating yard lines in multiples of 10 must be placed beginning 12 yards in from each sideline. These are to be 2 yards in length.

Two yards from the middle of each goal line and parallel to it, there shall be marked in the field of play, lines 1 yard in length. All boundary lines, goal lines, and marked lines are to be continuous lines. These, and any other specified markings, must be in white, and there shall be no exceptions without the authorization of the Commissioner. Field numerals must also be white.

Care must be exercised in any end zone marking or decoration or club identification at the 50-yard line that said marking or decorations do not in any way cause confusion as to delineation of goal lines, sidelines, and end lines. Such markings or decorations must be approved by the Commissioner.

The four intersections of goal lines and sidelines must be marked, at inside corners, by weighted pylons. In addition, two such pylons shall be placed on each end line (four in all).

**ARTICLE 3. GOAL LINE.** All measurements are to be made from the inside edges of the line marking the boundary lines. Each goal line marking is to be in its end zone so that the edge of the line toward the field of play (actual goal line) is 30 feet from the inside edge of the end line. Each goal line is to be eight inches wide.

All lines are to be marked with a material that is not injurious to eyes or skin. It is desirable that the yard line markers be flexible in order to prevent injury. No benches or rigid fixtures should be nearer than 30 feet from sidelines.

## SECTION 3 GOAL

**ARTICLE 1. CROSSBAR.** In the plane of each end line, there shall be a centrally placed horizontal crossbar 18 feet, 6 inches in length, the top face of which is 10 feet above the ground. The goal is the vertical plane extending indefinitely above the crossbar and between the lines indicated by the outer edges of the goal posts.

**ARTICLE 2. GOAL POSTS.** All goal posts will be the single-standard type, offset from the end line, bright gold in color, and padded in a manner prescribed by the League. The uprights will extend 35 feet above the crossbar and will be no less than 3 inches and no more than 4 inches in diameter. An orange-colored ribbon 4 inches by 42 inches is to be attached to the top of each post.

## SECTION 4 CHAIN CREW AND BALL CREW

Members of the chain crew and the ball crew must be uniformly identifiable as specified by the Commissioner. White shirts are to be worn by members of the chain crew. It is the responsibility of each team to furnish playable balls at all times by members of the ball crew from either side of the playing field.

## SECTION 5 SIDELINE MARKERS

The home club must provide and use the standard set of sideline markers that have been approved by the Commissioner.

## **RULE 2      THE BALL**

### **SECTION 1      DIMENSIONS**

The ball must be a "Wilson," hand selected, bearing the signature of the Commissioner of the League, Roger Goodell.

The ball shall be made up of an inflated (12½ to 13½ pounds) urethane bladder enclosed in a pebble grained, leather case (natural tan color) without corrugations of any kind. It shall have the form of a prolate spheroid, and the size and weight shall be: long axis, 11 to 11¼ inches; long circumference, 28 to 28½ inches; short circumference, 21 to 21¼ inches; weight, 14 to 15 ounces.

The Referee shall be the sole judge as to whether all balls offered for play comply with these specifications. A League-approved inflation measurement device will be provided to the officials for every game. In addition, a pump is to be furnished by the home club. The balls shall remain under the supervision of the Referee until they are delivered to members of the ball crew just prior to the start of the game.

### **SECTION 2      SUPPLY**

Each team will make 12 primary and 12 backup balls available for testing by the Referee no later than two hours and 15 minutes prior to the starting time of the game to meet League requirements. For all games, six new footballs, sealed in a special box and shipped by the manufacturer to the officiating crew, will be opened in the officials' locker room two hours and 45 minutes prior to the starting time of the game. These balls are to be specially marked by the manufacturer and used exclusively for the kicking game.

In the event a team ball does not conform to specifications, or its supply is exhausted, the Referee shall secure a proper ball from the opposing team and, failing that, use the best available ball. Any such circumstances must be reported to the Commissioner.

In case of rain or a wet, muddy, or slippery field, a playable ball shall be used at the request of the offensive team's center.

The game clock shall not stop for such action (unless undue delay occurs).

## RULE 3 DEFINITIONS

### SECTION 1 APPROVED RULING (A.R.)

An Approved Ruling (A.R.) is a written decision on a given statement of facts and serves to illustrate the intent and application of a rule. Supplemental notes are used to amplify a rule. A Note is more specific and applies to a particular situation. It is also used to indicate pertinent references to other rules.

An Official Ruling (O.R.) is a ruling made in the interim between the annual rules meetings and is official only during the current season.

### SECTION 2 THE BALL AND POSSESSION OF THE BALL

**ARTICLE 1. DEAD BALL.** A dead ball is one that is not in play. The time period during which the ball is dead is between downs. This includes the interval during all timeouts, including intermission, and from the time the ball becomes dead until it is legally put in play.

**ARTICLE 2. BALL READY FOR PLAY.** A dead ball is ready for play while the 40-second play clock is running when the ball is placed down by an official at the spot where the ball will next be put in play, or when the Referee signals for the 25-second play clock to start.

**ARTICLE 3. LIVE BALL.** A live ball is a ball that is in play. A dead ball becomes a live ball when it is:

- (a) legally kicked on a free kick down (6-1-1; 6-1-3, 6-1-6);
- (b) legally snapped on a scrimmage down (7-1-1; 7-6-1); or
- (c) legally kicked on a fair catch kick down (10-2-4, 11-4-3).

It continues in play until the down ends (3-8-1).

**ARTICLE 4. LOOSE BALL.** A loose ball is a live ball that is not in player possession, i.e., any ball that has been kicked, passed, or fumbled. A loose ball is considered to be in possession of the team (offense) whose player kicked, passed, or fumbled it. It is a loose ball until a player secures possession or until the ball becomes dead. If it has not yet struck the ground, a loose ball is in flight.

**ARTICLE 5. FUMBLE.** A fumble is any act, other than passing, successful handing, or legally kicking the ball, which results in a loss of player possession. It is not a fumble if the player immediately regains control of the ball. A fumble ends when a player of either team possesses the ball, or when the ball is dead. The use of the term fumble always means that the ball was in possession of a player when the act occurred (8-7-3).

*Note: An intentional fumble that causes the ball to go forward is a forward pass and may be illegal (8-1-1-Pen. a–c).*

**ARTICLE 6. MUFF.** A muff is the touching of a loose ball by a player in an unsuccessful attempt to obtain possession of it.

*Note: Any ball intentionally muffed forward is a bat and may be a foul (3-3; 12-5-1; 3-14).*

Touching the ball refers to any contact with the ball. There is no distinction between a player touching the ball with his hands, or with any other part of his body, including his hair, except as specifically provided for (9-2-2).

- (a) See 6-1-4, 6-1-6 and 6-2-5 for touching a free kick.
- (b) See 6-2-4 for touching a free kick before it goes out of bounds between the goal lines.
- (c) See 8-1-8 for ineligible offensive player touching a forward pass on, behind, or beyond the line.
- (d) See 9-2-1, 9-3-1 for touching a scrimmage kick on or behind the line, and also 9-2-4 for being pushed into a kick by an opponent.
- (e) See 11-4-2 for touching a kick during an attempted field goal.
- (f) Simultaneous touching by two opponents in an attempt to establish possession of a ball that has been kicked is treated as a first touch by the kicking team.

### ARTICLE 7. PLAYER POSSESSION.

A player is in possession when he is inbounds and has control of the ball with his hands or arms.

To gain possession of a loose ball that has been caught, intercepted, or recovered, a player (a) must have complete control of the ball with his hands or arms and (b) have both feet or any other part of his body, other than his hands, completely on the ground inbounds, and, after (a) and (b) have been fulfilled, perform any act common to the game (e.g., tuck the ball away, extend it forward, take an additional step, turn upfield, or avoid or ward off an opponent). It is not necessary that he commit such an act, provided that he maintains control of the ball long enough to do so. This rule applies in the field of play, at the sideline, and in the end zone.

#### Notes:

- (1) Movement of the ball does not automatically result in loss of control.
- (2) If a player who has completed the first two, but not the third requirement for possession, contacts the ground and loses control of the ball, there is no possession if the ball hits the ground before he regains control, or if he regains control out of bounds. If a player would have caught, intercepted, or recovered a ball inbounds, but is carried out of bounds, player possession will be granted (8-1-3-Note 5).
- (3) If any part of the foot hits out of bounds during the normal continuous motion of taking a step (heel-toe or toe-heel), then the foot is out of bounds. A player is inbounds if he drags his foot, or if there is a delay between the heel-toe or toe-heel touching the ground.

The terms catch, intercept, recover, advance, and fumble denote player possession (as distinguished from touching or muffing).

## Rule 3

A catch is made when a player inbounds secures possession of a pass, kick, or fumble that is in flight. An interception is made when an opponent who is inbounds catches a forward or backward pass or a fumble that has not touched the ground.

### Notes:

- (1) *It is a catch, or an interception, if, in the process of attempting to possess the ball, a player secures control of the ball prior to it touching the ground, and that control is maintained during and after the ball has touched the ground.*
- (2) *In the field of play, if a catch or interception has been completed, and the ball comes loose before the player is down by contact, it is a fumble, and the ball remains alive. It is also a fumble if the action occurs in the end zone of the player who caught the loose ball. If the action occurs in the opponent's end zone, it is a touchdown or a touchback.*

A recovery is made when a player inbounds secures possession of a loose ball after it has touched the ground.

If a loose ball is controlled simultaneously by two opponents, and both players retain it, it is simultaneous possession, and the ball belongs to the team last in possession, or to the receiving team when there has been a free kick, scrimmage kick, or fair catch kick. It is not simultaneous possession if a player gains control first and an opponent subsequently gains joint control.

## SECTION 3 BAT

A bat is the intentional striking of the ball with any part of the hand or arm. See 12-5-1.

## SECTION 4 BLOCKING

Blocking is the act of obstructing or impeding an opponent by contacting him with a part of the blocker's body.

A block in the back is a block that is delivered from behind an opponent above his waist. It is not a block in the back:

- (a) if a player is making a personal attempt to recover a loose ball;
- (b) if the opponent turns away from the blocker when contact is imminent;
- (c) if both of the blocker's hands are on the opponent's side. (If either hand is on the back, it is a foul).

A block below the waist is when the initial contact with any part of the blocker's body is below the waist of an opponent, other than the runner, who has one or both feet on the ground. A blocker who makes contact above the waist and then slides below the waist has not blocked below the waist. If an opponent uses his hands to ward off a block creating contact below the waist, it is not a block below the waist.

## SECTION 5 CHUCKING

Chucking is intentionally contacting an eligible receiver who is in front of a defender.

## SECTION 6 CLOSE-LINE PLAY

Close-line play is contact that occurs in an area extending between the outside edges of the normal tackle positions and three yards on either side of the line of scrimmage. Close-line play no longer exists after the ball leaves that area.

## SECTION 7 DISQUALIFIED PLAYER

A disqualified player is one who is prohibited from further participation in the game. He must return to his dressing room within a reasonable period of time and is not permitted to reappear in his team uniform or return to any area other than to which spectators have access.

## SECTION 8 DOWN

**ARTICLE 1. DOWN.** A down is a period of action that starts when the ball is put in play (3-2-3) and ends when the ball is declared dead (7-2-1).

A down that starts with a snap is a scrimmage down (3-29).

A down that starts with a free kick is a free kick down (6-1-1).

A down that starts with a fair catch kick is a fair catch kick down (10-2-4; 11-4-3).

**ARTICLE 2. SERIES OF DOWNS.** A series of downs is the four consecutive charged scrimmage downs allotted to the offensive team during which it must advance the ball to a yard line called "the line to gain" in order to retain possession.

**ARTICLE 3. LINE TO GAIN.** The line to gain is the spot 10 yards in advance of the spot of the snap that starts a series, except when a goal line is less than 10 yards from this spot. In that case, the line to gain is the goal line.

**ARTICLE 4. CHARGED DOWN.** A charged down is a scrimmage down that is not nullified by a penalty, or during which there is not a change of possession. It counts as a down in a series of downs.

**ARTICLE 5. FIRST DOWN.** The initial down in each series is the first down. If it is a charged down, subsequent charged downs are numbered consecutively (i.e., second down, third down, or fourth down) until a new series is declared for either team (7-3).

## SECTION 9 FAIR CATCH

A fair catch is an unhindered catch of a scrimmage kick that has crossed the line of scrimmage and has not touched the ground or of a free kick that has not touched the ground, by a player of the receiving team who has given a valid fair catch signal. A fair catch may be followed by a fair catch kick (See 10-2-4 and 11-4-3).

## SECTION 10 FIELD GOAL

A field goal is made by kicking the ball from the field of play through the plane of the opponent's goal, which is an area either between the goal posts and above the crossbar, or, if above the goal posts, between the outside edges of the goal posts. A field goal is made by a drop kick or a place kick from (a) on or behind the line on a play from scrimmage or (b) during a fair catch kick (See 3-17-1-Item 1-2; 10-2-4; and 11-4-3).

## SECTION 11 THE FIELD

**ARTICLE 1. BOUNDARY LINES.** The boundary lines are the end lines and the sidelines and enclose the field upon which the game is played.

**ARTICLE 2. END LINES.** The end lines are the lines at each end of the field and are perpendicular to the sidelines. The end line is 10 yards from the goal line and at the back of the end zone.

**ARTICLE 3. END ZONE.** The end zone is the rectangle formed by the goal line, the end line, and the sidelines. The goal line and the pylons are in the end zone.

**ARTICLE 4. FIELD OF PLAY.** The field of play is the rectangle formed by the goal lines and the sidelines. It does not include the end zone.

**ARTICLE 5. GOAL.** The goal is the area above the crossbar between the uprights, or, if above the uprights, the area between the outside edges of the uprights. A team's own goal is the one it is defending. The adjacent goal line is known as its goal line.

**ARTICLE 6. GOAL LINES.** The goal lines are the lines between the sidelines that separate the end zone from the field of play. The goal lines are vertical planes that are parallel to and 10 yards from the end lines.

**ARTICLE 7. INBOUNDS LINES.** The inbounds lines are hash marks on the field of play that are 70 feet nine inches from and parallel to each sideline.

**ARTICLE 8. SIDELINES.** The sidelines are the lines on each side of the field and are perpendicular to the end lines. The sidelines separate the field of play from the area that is out of bounds.

**ARTICLE 9. YARD LINE.** A yard line is any line and its vertical plane parallel to the end line. The yard lines (marked or unmarked) in the field of play are named by number in yards from a team's goal line to the center of the field. By way of example, the yard line 19 yards from Team A's goal line is called A's 19-yard line. The yard line 51 yards from A's goal line is called B's 49-yard line. For brevity, these are referred to as A's 19 and B's 49 or A19 and B49.

## SECTION 12 FORWARD PROGRESS

**ARTICLE 1. FORWARD PROGRESS.** The forward progress of a runner or airborne receiver is the point at which his advance toward his opponent's goal ends and is the spot at which the ball is declared dead by rule, irrespective of the runner or receiver being pushed or carried backward by an opponent.

**ARTICLE 2. FORWARD, BEYOND, OR IN ADVANCE.** Forward, beyond, or in advance of are terms that designate a point nearer the goal line of the defense. Backward or behind designate a point nearer the goal line of the offense. A pass parallel to a yard line, or an offensive player moving parallel to it at the snap, is considered backward.

## SECTION 13 FOULS AND SPOTS OF ENFORCEMENT, VIOLATION

**ARTICLE 1. TYPES OF FOULS.** A foul is any infraction of a playing rule for which a penalty is prescribed.

- (a) A live ball foul is a foul that occurs during the period after the snap until the ball is dead.
- (b) A dead ball foul is a foul that occurs in the continuing action after a down ends, or a taunting foul that occurs at any time.
- (c) A foul between downs is a foul that occurs after the end of the down and after any continuing action resulting from the down, but prior to the next snap or free kick.
- (d) A multiple foul is one of two or more fouls by the same team during the same down (14-1-3), including dead ball fouls.
- (e) A double foul is a foul by either team during the same down during which both teams commit at least one foul, including dead ball fouls.

**ARTICLE 2. BASIC SPOT.** The basic spot is a reference point for specific types of plays that is used to determine the spot of enforcement.

**ARTICLE 3. SPOTS OF ENFORCEMENT.** The spot of enforcement is the spot at which a penalty is enforced. The spots of enforcement are as follows:

- (a) The previous spot: The spot at which the ball was last put in play.
- (b) The spot of the foul: The spot at which a foul was committed or, by rule, is considered to have been committed.
- (c) The spot of a backward pass or a fumble: The spot at which the backward pass or fumble occurred during the down in which there was a foul.
- (d) The dead ball spot: The spot at which the ball became dead.
- (e) The succeeding spot: The spot at which the ball will next be put in play (i.e., the spot of the ball after enforcement for a foul, or, if there has been no foul, the spot at which the ball became dead).
- (f) The other Try spot. The yard line of the other Try option, as determined by any previously enforced penalties, if applicable.
- (g) The spot of a change of possession: The spot at which possession is gained by or awarded to the opponent.

**ARTICLE 4. VIOLATION.** A violation is an infraction of a playing rule for which a penalty is not prescribed. A violation does not offset a foul.

## SECTION 14 HANDING THE BALL

Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one teammate to another without passing or kicking it.

- (a) Except where permitted by rule, handing the ball forward to a teammate is illegal.
- (b) Loss of player possession by unsuccessful execution of attempted handing is a fumble charged to the player that last had possession. A muffed handoff (legal or illegal) is a fumble, unless either player immediately regains control of the ball, and the ball remains alive.
- (c) A forward handoff occurs when the ball is handed (regardless of the direction of the movement of the ball) to a player who is in advance of a teammate from whose hands he takes or receives it.

## SECTION 15 HUDDLE

A huddle is the action of two or more players in the field of play or in the end zone who, instead of assuming their normal position for the snap, free kick, or fair catch kick, form a group for receiving instructions for the next play or for any other reason.

## SECTION 16 IMPETUS

Impetus is the action of a player who carries the ball or provides the force (i.e., a pass, kick, snap, or fumble) that causes a ball in the field of play to touch or cross a goal line. If a loose ball touches or crosses a goal line, the impetus is attributed to the team whose player passed, kicked, snapped, or fumbled the ball, unless an opponent:

- (a) muffs a ball that is at rest, or nearly at rest;
- (b) bats a ball that has been kicked or fumbled;
- (c) bats a backward pass after it has struck the ground; or
- (d) illegally kicks any ball (see 12-5-2).

### Note:

- (1) *A loose ball retains its original status (as a pass, kick, fumble, etc.) even if a new impetus is added.*
- (2) *The impetus is always attributed to the offense, unless the defense creates a new force that sends the ball behind its own goal line by muffing a ball which is at rest or nearly at rest, or by batting a loose ball on the ground or kicking any loose ball.*
- (3) *If a passive player is pushed or blocked into any kicked or fumbled ball or into a backward pass after it has struck the ground, causing the loose ball to touch a goal line or anything on or behind a goal line, the impetus is attributed to the pusher or blocker, provided that the pushed (blocked) player was not making an attempt to block an opponent.*

## SECTION 17 KICKS

**ARTICLE 1. KICK.** A kick is intentionally striking the ball with the knee, lower leg, or foot. A kick ends when a player of either team possesses the ball, or when the ball is dead.

**Item 1. Drop Kick.** A drop kick is a kick by a player who drops the ball and kicks it as, or immediately after, it touches the ground.

**Item 2. Place kick.** A place kick is a kick made by a player while the ball is in a fixed position on the ground. The ball may be held in position by a teammate. If it is a **free kick**, it is permissible to use an approved manufactured tee.

**Item 3. Punt.** A punt is a kick made by a player who drops the ball and kicks it before it strikes the ground.

**ARTICLE 2. KICKER.** A kicker is the player of Team A who legally drop kicks, place kicks, or punts the ball. Team A is identified as the kickers during a down in which there is a scrimmage kick, free kick, or fair catch kick.

**ARTICLE 3. RECEIVER.** A receiver is any Team B player during a down in which there is a scrimmage kick, free kick, or fair catch kick. Team B is identified as the receiving team during the entire down.

**ARTICLE 4. FAIR CATCH KICK.** A fair catch kick is a drop kick or place kick without a tee from the spot of a fair catch in an attempt to score a field goal.

**ARTICLE 5. FREE KICK.** A free kick is a kickoff, safety kick, or **onside kick** that puts the ball in play to start a free kick down.

**Item 1. Kickoff.** A kickoff is a kick that puts the ball in play at the start of each half, at the start of overtime, after a try, and after a successful field goal.

**Item 2. Safety Kick.** A safety kick is a kick that puts the ball in play after a safety.

**Item 3. Onside Kick.** An onside kick is a free kick that the kicking team attempts to legally recover from the kicking team's restraining line to the furthest point downfield within the onside kick setup zone.

**ARTICLE 6. RESTRAINING LINES.** The restraining lines are lines which restrict the alignment of the kicking and receiving teams during a free kick and fair catch kick.

**ARTICLE 7. SCRIMMAGE KICK.** A scrimmage kick is a punt, drop kick, or place kick from on or behind the line of scrimmage.

**Item 1. Scrimmage Kick Formation.** A scrimmage kick formation is a formation with no player in position to receive a hand-to-hand snap and;

- (a) Punt formation: at least one player 10 or more yards behind the neutral zone; or
- (b) Field Goal or Try Kick formation: a potential holder and potential kicker seven or more yards behind the neutral zone in position for a place kick.

For either (a) or (b) to qualify as a scrimmage kick formation, it must be obvious that a kick may be attempted. If Team A is in a scrimmage kick formation at the snap, any action by Team A during the down is deemed to be from a scrimmage kick formation.



**ARTICLE 8. TEE.** A tee is an approved device that is used to elevate the ball for a place kick during **any free kick**.

## **SECTION 18 LINE OF SCRIMMAGE, NEUTRAL ZONE**

**ARTICLE 1. SCRIMMAGE LINE.** The line of scrimmage is the vertical plane of the yard line that passes through the forward point of the ball after it has been made ready for play. The term scrimmage line, or line, implies a play from scrimmage.

**ARTICLE 2. NEUTRAL ZONE.** The neutral zone is the space between the forward and backward points of the ball (planes) and extends to the sidelines. It starts when the ball is ready for play (See neutral zone infraction, 7-4-4).

**ARTICLE 3. PLAYER ON LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.** A player of Team A, who is on the line of scrimmage, must have his shoulders facing Team B's goal line.

**Item 1. Non-Snapper.** If he is not the snapper, no part of his body is permitted to be in the neutral zone at the snap, and his helmet must break a vertical plane that passes through the beltline of the snapper.

**Item 2. Snapper.** If he is the snapper, no part of his body may be beyond the neutral zone.

**Item 3. Team B.** A Team B player is considered to be on the line of scrimmage if he is within one yard of the neutral zone.

**ARTICLE 4. ENCROACHING.** A player is encroaching (7-4-3) on the neutral zone when any part of his body is in it, and he contacts an offensive player or the ball prior to the snap.

**ARTICLE 5. LOOSE BALL CROSSES LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.** A loose ball has crossed the line of scrimmage when, as the result of a fumble, pass, or legal kick by a Team A player, it touches the ground or any player or official beyond the neutral zone.

## **SECTION 19 OFFSIDE**

A player is offside when any part of his body or his person is in the neutral zone, or is beyond the kicking team's restraining line **for an onside kick** or fair catch kick line when the ball is put in play, unless he is a holder of a place kick for **an onside kick (6-1-6-d-1)** or fair catch kick (11-4-3), or a kicker **for an onside kick (6-1-6-d-2)**. The snapper is offside if any part of his body is beyond the neutral zone. The kicker is not offside unless his kicking foot is beyond his restraining line when the ball is kicked.

## **SECTION 20 OUT OF BOUNDS, INBOUNDS, AND INBOUNDS SPOT**

**ARTICLE 1. PLAYER OR OFFICIAL OUT OF BOUNDS.** A player or an official is out of bounds when he touches a boundary line, or when he touches anything that is on or outside a boundary line, except a player, an official, or a pylon.

**ARTICLE 2. PLAYER INBOUNDS.** A player who has been out of bounds reestablishes himself as an inbounds player when both feet, or any part of his body other than his hands, touch the ground within the boundary lines, provided that no part of his body is touching a boundary line or anything other than a player, an official, or a pylon on or outside a boundary line.

**ARTICLE 3. BALL OUT OF BOUNDS.**

**Item 1. Ball in Player Possession.** A ball that is in player possession is out of bounds when the runner is out of bounds, or when the ball touches a boundary line or anything that is on or outside such line, except another player or an official.

**Item 2. Loose Ball.** A loose ball that is not in player control is out of bounds when it touches a boundary line or anything that is on or outside such line, including a player, an official, or a pylon.

**ARTICLE 4. OUT OF BOUNDS SPOT.**

**Item 1. Loose Ball.** If a loose ball touches anything on or outside a boundary line, the out of bounds spot is the forward point of the ball when the ball crosses the sideline.

**Item 2. Runner Out of Bounds.** If the ball is in player possession when that player goes out of bounds, the out of bounds spot is the forward point of the ball when the ball crosses the sideline, or, if the ball does not cross the sideline, the forward point of the ball at the instant the player is out of bounds.

**Item 3. Runner Inbounds.** If the ball, while in possession of a player who is inbounds, is declared out of bounds because of touching anything that is out of bounds, the out of bounds spot is the yard line through the forward point of the ball at the instant of such touching.

**ARTICLE 5. INBOUNDS SPOT.** The inbounds spot is a spot on the inbounds line (the hash marks) that passes through the spot where the ball went out of bounds between the goal lines.

**ARTICLE 6. PLAYER INSIDE THE LANDING ZONE.** A player who has been outside the front yard line of the Landing Zone reestablishes himself as a player inside the Landing Zone when both feet or any part of his body, other than his hands, touch the ground within the Landing Zone, provided that no part of his body is touching outside the Landing Zone or anything other than a player outside the Landing Zone.

**ARTICLE 7. LOOSE BALL OUT OF LANDING ZONE.** A loose ball on a kickoff or safety kick is outside the Landing Zone when it first touches the ground or anything that is outside the front yard line of the Landing Zone, including a player.

## **SECTION 21 PASS**

**ARTICLE 1. PASS.** A pass is the movement caused by a player intentionally throwing, or shoveling/**pushing** (shovel pass) the ball (3-24-2).

**ARTICLE 2. PASSER AND PASSING TEAM.** A player who makes a legal forward pass is known as the passer until the play ends. The teammates of any player who passes the ball forward (legally or illegally) are known collectively as the passing team or passers.

**ARTICLE 3. PASS PLAY.** A pass play begins with the snap and ends when a forward pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage is caught by a player of either team or is incomplete. After the pass is caught, a running play begins.

**Note:** If a pass is batted, muffed, punched, or kicked in any direction, its original designation as a forward pass or a backward pass does not change.

**ARTICLE 4. FORWARD PASS.** It is a forward pass if:

- (a) the ball initially moves forward (to a point nearer the opponent's goal line) after leaving the passer's hand(s);
- (b) the ball first touches the ground, a player, an official, or anything else at a point that is nearer the opponent's goal line than the point at which the ball leaves the passer's hand(s); or
- (c) when a Team A player is holding the ball to pass it forward, any intentional movement forward of his hand starts a forward pass.

**Item 1. Contact by Team B Player.** If contact by an opponent materially affects a passer after the passer begins his throwing motion, it is a forward pass if he passes the ball, regardless of where the ball strikes the ground, a player, an official, or anything else. When this occurs, intentional grounding rules do not apply.

When a passer is contacted by an opponent before beginning his throwing motion, the direction of the pass is the responsibility of the passer, and intentional grounding rules apply.

**Item 2. Passer Tucks Ball.** If the player loses possession of the ball during an attempt to bring it back toward his body, or if the player loses possession after he has tucked the ball into his body, it is a fumble.

**Item 3. Passer Re-Cocks His Arm.** If the player loses possession of the ball while attempting to re-cock his arm, it is a fumble.

**Item 4. Fumbled or Muffed Ball Goes Forward.** The fact that a fumbled or muffed ball goes forward is disregarded, unless the act is ruled intentional. If it is intentional, a fumbled ball that goes forward is a forward pass (8-1-1), and a muff is a bat (12-5-1).

**ARTICLE 5. BACKWARD PASS.** It is a backward pass if the yard line at which the ball is first touched by a player or the ground is parallel to or behind the yard line at which the ball leaves the passer's hand. A snap becomes a backward pass when the snapper releases the ball.

## SECTION 22 PENALTY

**ARTICLE 1. PENALTY.** A penalty is imposed upon a team that has committed a foul and may result in loss of down, loss of yardage, an automatic first down, a charged timeout, a loss of playing time, withdrawal or disqualification of a player, extension of a period, the award of a score, or a combination thereof.

**ARTICLE 2. LOSS OF DOWN.** The phrase loss of down indicates that a team committing a foul will not have the opportunity to repeat the down after enforcement of any yardage penalty.

## SECTION 23 PLAYER

A player is a participant of either team who is in the game.

## SECTION 24 PLAYS

**ARTICLE 1. FREE KICK PLAY.** A free kick play begins with a legal or illegal free kick and ends when a player of either team establishes possession of the ball, or when the ball is dead by rule. A running play begins when a player of Team B establishes possession.

**ARTICLE 2. PASSING PLAY.** A pass play begins with the snap and ends when a forward pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage is caught by a player of either team or is incomplete. At the instant that a pass is caught, a running play begins.

**ARTICLE 3. RUNNING PLAY.** A running play begins in the following situations:

- (a) If there is not a subsequent kick or legal or illegal forward pass from behind the line of scrimmage, a running play begins with the snap.
- (b) If there is a legal or illegal forward pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage, a running play begins when the forward pass is caught by a player of either team.
- (c) If there is a running play followed by an illegal forward pass thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage, or by an illegal forward pass not from scrimmage, a new running play begins when the pass is caught by a player of either team.
- (d) If there is a free kick, a running play begins when Team B establishes possession of the ball.
- (e) If there is a scrimmage kick, a running play begins when Team B establishes possession of the ball, or when Team A establishes possession of a kicked ball behind the line of scrimmage.
- (f) If there is a running play followed by a fumble or a backward pass, a new running play begins when a player of either team establishes possession of the ball.

A running play ends:

- (a) When the ball is declared dead;
- (b) When a runner loses or relinquishes possession by a fumble or a backward pass; or
- (c) When a player of either team throws an illegal forward pass beyond the line of scrimmage or when there is not a line of scrimmage.



**Note:** *The running play includes the loose ball action before a player gains or regains possession or the ball is declared dead.*

**ARTICLE 4. SCRIMMAGE KICK PLAY.** A scrimmage kick play begins with the snap. It ends when a player of either team establishes possession of a kicked ball, or when the ball is dead by rule.

**ARTICLE 5. FAIR CATCH KICK PLAY.** A fair catch kick play begins when the ball is kicked. It ends when a player of either team establishes possession of the ball, or when the ball is dead by rule.

**ARTICLE 6. COMBINATIONS OF PLAYS.** There may be a combination of a running play and a passing play, free kick play, scrimmage kick play, or fair catch kick play during the same down, and there may be more than one running play or scrimmage kick play during the same down.

## **SECTION 25 POCKET AREA**

The pocket area is the area between the outside edges of the normal tackle positions on each side of the center extending backward to the offensive team's end line. **A player who is in possession of the ball is out of the pocket area, and the pocket area no longer exists, if any part of his body or the ball is outside of the pocket area.**

## **SECTION 26 POST-POSSESSION FOUL**

A foul by the receiving team is a post-possession foul if it occurs during a scrimmage kick that crosses the line of scrimmage, provided that the receiving team does not lose possession during the rest of the down. See 9-5-1-Exc. 4.

## **SECTION 27 RUNNER**

A runner is the offensive player who is in possession of a live ball (3-2-7), i.e., holding the ball or carrying it in any direction.

## **SECTION 28 SAFETY**

It is a safety, if the ball is dead in possession of a team on or behind its own goal line when the impetus (3-16) comes from the team defending that goal line. If the offense commits a foul behind its own goal line, it is a safety if the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot.

## **SECTION 29 SCRIMMAGE DOWN, FROM SCRIMMAGE, NOT FROM SCRIMMAGE**

A scrimmage down is one that starts with a snap (3-31). From scrimmage refers to any action from the start of the snap until the down ends or until Team B secures possession. Any action that occurs during the down after a change of team possession is not from scrimmage.

## **SECTION 30 SHIFT**

A shift is any simultaneous change of position or stance by two or more offensive players before the snap after the ball has been made ready for play for a scrimmage down, including movement to the line of scrimmage by the offensive team prior to the snap (7-4-7).

## **SECTION 31 SNAP AND THE SNAPPER**

A snap is a backward pass that puts the ball in play to start a scrimmage down, either by handing it or passing it backward from its position on the ground. The snapper is the offensive player who initiates this action.

## **SECTION 32 SUSPENDED PLAYER**

A suspended player is one who must be withdrawn, in accordance with Rule 5, for correction of illegal equipment (5-4).

## **SECTION 33 TIGHT END BOX**

The tight end box is a rectangle that is enclosed by imaginary lines two yards outside the normal tackle positions and five yards on either side of the line of scrimmage. The tight end box continues to exist after the ball leaves the area.

## **SECTION 34 TACKLING**

Tackling is an attempt by a defensive player to hold a runner to halt his advance or bring him to the ground.

## **SECTION 35 TEAM A AND B, OFFENSE AND DEFENSE**

**ARTICLE 1. OFFENSE AND DEFENSE.** Whenever a team is in possession (3-2-7) of the ball, it is the offense, and its opponent is the defense. When there is a change of possession during the down, the team that is the offense becomes the defense.

**ARTICLE 2. TEAM A AND TEAM B.** The team that puts the ball in play is Team A, and its opponent is Team B. They remain Team A and Team B until a down ends, even though there may be one or more changes of possession during the down. Team A is always the offense when a down starts but becomes the defense if Team B secures possession during the down. A player of Team A is referred to as A1 and his teammates as A2, A3, etc. The opponents are B1, B2, etc.

**ARTICLE 3. CHANGE OF POSSESSION.** A change of possession occurs when a player of the defensive team secures possession of a ball that has been kicked, passed, or fumbled by a player of the offensive team, or when the ball is awarded to the opposing team by rule. A change of possession includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) An interception of a forward pass;
- (b) A catch or recovery of a fumble or backward pass;
- (c) A catch or recovery of a scrimmage kick, free kick, or fair catch kick;
- (d) When the offensive team fails to reach the line to gain on fourth down; or
- (e) When the offensive team misses a field goal attempt.

### **SECTION 36      TIMEOUT OR TIME IN**

**ARTICLE 1. TIMEOUT.** A timeout is any interval during which the game clock is stopped (4-4) and includes the intermission (4-1-2 and 4-1-3).

During any timeout, including an intermission, all playing rules continue in effect. Representatives of either team are prohibited from entering the field, unless they are incoming substitutes, or team attendants or trainers entering to provide for the welfare of a player, and any game-type activities are prohibited on the field of play. The head coach may enter the field to check on the welfare of a player who is injured, but no assistant coach may enter the field.

**ARTICLE 2. CHARGED TEAM TIMEOUT.** A charged team timeout is an interval during which the game clock is stopped and play is suspended at the request of one of the teams or when it is charged to one of the teams by rule. A timeout may be granted only when the ball is dead.

**ARTICLE 3. TIME IN.** Time In is any interval during which the game clock is running (4-3).

### **SECTION 37      TOUCHBACK**

It is a touchback if the ball is dead on or behind the goal line a team is defending, provided that the impetus comes from an opponent, and that it is not a touchdown or an incomplete pass.

### **SECTION 38      TOUCHDOWN**

It is a touchdown if any part of the ball is on, above, or behind the opponent's goal line while legally in possession of an inbounds player, provided it is not a touchback.

### **SECTION 39      TRIPPING**

Tripping is the use of the leg or foot to obstruct any opponent, including a runner. (12-2-14).

### **SECTION 40      TRY**

A Try is the attempt by a team that has scored a touchdown to add one point (by a field goal) or two points (by a touchdown) during one untimed scrimmage down (11-3).

### **SECTION 41      TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

The two-minute warning is an automatic timeout that occurs at the conclusion of the last down for which the ball is legally snapped or kicked prior to two minutes remaining on the game clock in the second and fourth periods.

### **SECTION 42      T-FORMATION QUARTERBACK**

A "T-Formation Quarterback" is defined as a player aligned one yard or less behind the snapper.

## RULE 4 GAME TIMING

### SECTION 1 PERIODS, INTERMISSIONS, HALFTIME

**ARTICLE 1. LENGTH OF GAME.** The length of the game is 60 minutes, divided into four periods of 15 minutes each. In the event the score is tied at the end of four periods, the game is extended by an overtime period (or periods) as prescribed in Rule 16.

**ARTICLE 2. INTERMISSIONS.** There will be intervals of at least two minutes between the first and second periods (first half) and between the third and fourth periods (second half). During these intermissions all playing rules continue in force, and no representative of either team shall enter the field unless he is an incoming substitute, or a team attendant or trainer, entering to see to the welfare of a player. The head coach may enter the field to check on the welfare of a player who is injured, but no assistant coach may enter the field.

**Penalty: For illegally entering the field: Loss of 15 yards from the succeeding spot (13-1-6-Pen.).**

**ARTICLE 3. HALFTIME.** Between the second and third periods, there shall be an intermission of 13 minutes. During this intermission, play is suspended, and teams may leave the field. The Back Judge will time halftime. See 13-1-1 for fouls by non-players between halves.

**ARTICLE 4. OFFICIAL TIME.** The stadium electric clock shall be the official time. The game clock operator shall start and stop the clock upon the signal of any official in accordance with the rules. The Side Judge shall supervise the timing of the game, and in case the stadium clock becomes inoperative, or if it is not being operated correctly, the Side Judge shall take over official timing on the field. Game officials can correct the game clock only before the next legal snap or kick, including an untimed down or Try.

### SECTION 2 STARTING A PERIOD OR HALF

**ARTICLE 1. KICKOFF ON SCHEDULE.** Both teams must be on the field to kick off at the scheduled time for the start of each half. Prior to the start of the game, both teams are required to appear on the field at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled kickoff to ensure sufficient time for proper warm-up. Designated members of the officiating crew must notify **designated members of each team** of the scheduled time for kickoff prior to the start of each half.

**Penalties:**

- (a) **For delaying the start of a half: Loss of 15 yards from the spot of the kickoff as determined by 6-1-2-a.**
- (b) **For failure to appear on the field at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled kickoff of the first half: Loss of the coin-toss option for both halves and overtime, and loss of 15 yards from the spot of the kickoff for the first half.**

**ARTICLE 2. TOSS OF COIN.** Not more than three minutes before the kickoff of the first half, the Referee, in the presence of both team's captains (limit of six per team, active, inactive or honorary) shall toss a coin at the center of the field. Prior to the Referee's toss, the call of "heads" or "tails" must be made by the captain of the visiting team, or by the captain designated by the Referee if there is no home team. Unless the winner of the toss defers his choice to the second half, he must choose one of two privileges, and the loser is given the other. The two privileges are:

- (a) The opportunity to receive the kickoff, or to kick off; or
- (b) The choice of goal his team will defend.

If the coin does not turn over in the air or the toss is compromised in any way, the Referee shall toss it again. The captain's original call may not be changed.

**Penalty: For failure to comply: Loss of coin-toss option for both halves and overtime, and loss of 15 yards from the spot of the kickoff for the first half.**

For the second half, the captain who lost the pregame toss is to have the first choice of the two privileges listed in (a) or (b), unless one of the teams lost its first and second half options, or unless the winner of the pregame toss deferred his choice to the second half, in which case he must choose (a) or (b) above. Immediately prior to the start of the second half, the captains of both teams must inform the Referee of their respective choices.

A captain's first choice from any alternative privileges listed above is final and not subject to change.

**ARTICLE 3. CHANGE OF GOALS.** At the end of the first and third periods, the teams must change goals. Team possession, the number of the succeeding down, the relative position of the ball on the field of play, and the line to gain remain the same.

### SECTION 3 STARTING THE GAME CLOCK

**ARTICLE 1. FREE KICK DOWN.** The game clock operator shall start the game clock (time in) after a free kick when the ball is legally touched in the field of play. The game clock shall not start if:

- (a) the receiving team touches or recovers the ball in the end zone and does not carry the ball into the field of play;
- (b) the kicking team recovers the ball in the field of play (prior to any other legal touching); or
- (c) the receiving team signals for and makes a fair catch.

**ARTICLE 2. SCRIMMAGE DOWN.** Following any timeout (3-36-1), the game clock shall be started on a scrimmage down when the ball is next snapped, except in the following situations:

- (a) Whenever a runner goes out of bounds on a play from scrimmage, the game clock is started on the Referee's signal that a ball has been returned to play, except that the clock will start on the snap:
  - (1) after a change of possession;
  - (2) after the two-minute warning of the first half; or
  - (3) inside the last five minutes of the second half.

## Rule 4

- (b) If there is an injury timeout prior to the two-minute warning, the game clock is started as if the injury timeout had not occurred.
- (c) If there is an excess team timeout after the two-minute warning, the game clock is started as if the excess timeout had not occurred, **unless the opponent chooses to have the clock start on the snap.**
- (d) If there is a Referee's timeout, the game clock is started as if the Referee's timeout had not occurred.
- (e) If the game clock is stopped before or after a down for a foul by either team, following enforcement or declination of a penalty, the game clock will start as if the foul had not occurred, except that the clock will start on the snap if:
  - (1) the foul occurs after the two-minute warning of the first half;
  - (2) the foul occurs inside the last five minutes of the second half;
  - (3) the offense commits a foul during the fourth period or **regular season** overtime after the ball has been made ready for play, causing the clock to stop before a snap;
  - (4) the offense commits two successive delay of game penalties during the same down while time is in (see 12-3-1-n); or
  - (5) a specific rule prescribes otherwise.
- (f) If a fumble or backward pass by any player goes out of bounds, the game clock starts on the Referee's signal that a ball has been returned to the field of play.
- (g) When there is a 10-second runoff, the game clock starts when the Referee signals that the ball is ready for play.
- (h) During the Try, which is an untimed down.
- (i) When a specific rule prescribes otherwise.

**ARTICLE 3. FAIR CATCH KICK DOWN.** The game clock operator shall start the game clock for a fair catch kick down when the ball is kicked.

### SECTION 4 STOPPING THE GAME CLOCK

The game clock operator shall stop the game clock (timeout) upon a signal by any official or upon the operator's own positive knowledge:

- (a) at the end of a down in which there is a free kick or fair catch kick;
- (b) when the kicking team recovers a scrimmage kick beyond the line of scrimmage;
- (c) when the ball is out of bounds;
- (d) when the ball is dead on or behind a goal line;
- (e) at the end of a down during which a foul occurs;
- (f) when a forward pass is incomplete;
- (g) at the time of a foul for which the ball remains dead or is dead immediately;
- (h) when the Referee signals the two-minute warning for a half;
- (i) when a down is completed during which or after there is a change of possession; or
- (j) when any official signals a timeout for any other reason.

### SECTION 5 TIMEOUTS

**ARTICLE 1. CHARGED TEAM TIMEOUTS.** The Referee shall suspend play while the ball is dead and declare a charged team timeout upon the request for a timeout by the head coach or any player (not a substitute) to any official. If an assistant coach signals for a timeout and it is inadvertently granted, the timeout will stand.

**Item 1. Three Timeouts Allowed.** A team is allowed three charged team timeouts during each half. The Referee or another game official will notify the head coach when he has exhausted his three charged team timeouts in a half.

**Item 2. Length of Timeouts.** Charged team timeouts shall be two minutes in length unless the timeout is not used by television for a commercial break. Timeouts shall be 30 seconds in length when the designated number of television commercials have been exhausted in a quarter, if it is a second charged team timeout in the same dead ball period, or when the Referee so indicates.

**Item 3. Consecutive Team Timeouts.** Each team may be granted a charged team timeout during the same dead ball period, but a second charged team timeout by either team during the same dead ball period is prohibited, and such requests shall be ignored. Such team timeouts may follow a Referee's timeout or any automatic timeouts.

**Penalty: For when a team is inadvertently granted a second timeout during the same dead ball period, or a timeout after exhausting its three timeouts during a half: Loss of five yards and the timeout is charged.**

**If the timeout is by the offense while time is in after the two-minute warning, a 10-second runoff option is available. If the timeout is by the defense while time is in, the play clock is reset to 40 seconds. If time is in, the game clock will start with the ready for play signal unless the offense chooses to have the clock start on the snap.**

**Item 4. Unsportsmanlike Conduct.** An attempt to call an excess team timeout, or to call a second timeout in the same dead ball period, by Team B in an attempt to "freeze" a kicker, shall be ignored and is unsportsmanlike conduct even if inadvertently granted (See 12-3-1-v). The timeout will be charged if inadvertently granted. This will apply to field goal or Try attempts.

**ARTICLE 2. INJURY TIMEOUTS.** If an official determines a player to be injured, or if attendants from the bench come on the field to assist an injured player, an injury timeout will be called by the Referee. If the ATC Spotter identifies a player for medical attention, the rules pertaining to Injury Timeouts in Article 3 and Article 4 (c) apply.

**ARTICLE 3. INJURY TIMEOUTS PRIOR TO TWO-MINUTE WARNING OF EITHER HALF.** When an injury timeout is called, the injured player must leave the game for the completion of one down. The player will be permitted to remain in the game if:

- (a) either team calls a charged team timeout;
- (b) the injury is the result of a foul by an opponent; or
- (c) the period ends or the two-minute warning occurs before the next snap.

At the conclusion of an injury timeout, the game clock will start as if the injury timeout had not occurred. If either team takes, or is charged with, a timeout, the clock will start on the snap.

**ARTICLE 4. INJURY TIMEOUTS AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING OF EITHER HALF.** After the two-minute warning of a half, the following shall apply:

- (a) If a team has not used its three charged team timeouts, the team of the injured player will be charged a team timeout, unless:
  - (1) the injury is the result of a foul by an opponent; or
  - (2) the injury occurs during a down in which there is a change of possession, a touchdown, a safety, a successful field goal, or an attempted Try.
- (b) If a team has used its three charged team timeouts, an excess team timeout shall be called by the Referee, unless:
  - (1) the injury is the result of a foul by an opponent; or
  - (2) the injury occurs during a down in which there is a change of possession, a touchdown, a safety, a successful field goal, or an attempted Try.
- (c) The player must leave the game for the completion of one down, unless:
  - (1) the injury is the result of a foul by an opponent; or
  - (2) either team calls or is charged a team timeout other than an excess timeout.

**Penalty: For the second and each subsequent excess team timeout after the two-minute warning: Loss of five yards from the succeeding spot for delay of the game.**

**Notes:**

- (1) *No yardage penalty will be assessed for the first excess team timeout, but a 10-second runoff of the game clock may be applicable pursuant to Note 3 below. At the conclusion of an excess timeout taken while time is in, the game clock shall start with the ready for play signal, **unless the opponent chooses to have the clock start on the snap**. For any excess timeout charged to the defense, the play clock is reset to 40 seconds.*
- (2) *If the Referee has already called an excess team timeout in that half for a team, any subsequent excess timeout for that team will result in a five-yard penalty, and a 10-second runoff of the game clock may be applicable pursuant to Note 3 below. (Such penalty shall be considered a foul between downs and will not offset a foul or be part of a multiple foul).*
- (3) *If an excess team timeout is charged against a team in possession of the ball, and the timeout causes the clock to stop or delays the clock from starting on the ready for play signal, the ball shall not be put in play until the time on the game clock has been reduced by 10 seconds, if the defense so chooses, **the play clock reset to 30 seconds, and the game clock shall start with the ready for play**.*
- (4) *Either half can end as the result of the 10-second runoff referenced above.*
- (5) *If an injury timeout is called for both teams during or after a down, charged team timeouts and/or excess team timeouts are charged as appropriate, but no yardage or 10-second runoff penalties shall be enforced.*
- (6) *If a foul by either team occurs during a down in which there is also an injury, such foul does not affect the charging of an excess timeout, but it does prevent a 10-second runoff that may result from the excess timeout, because the foul stopped the clock.*
- (7) *If a dead ball foul by either team occurs after a play in which there is also an injury to the opposing team, such foul does not affect the charging of an excess timeout, but it does prevent a 10-second runoff or 40-second play clock reset that may result from the excess timeout.*
- (8) *The Competition Committee deprecates feigning injuries, with subsequent withdrawal, to obtain a timeout without penalty. Coaches are urged to cooperate in discouraging this practice.*
- (9) *There can never be a 10-second runoff against the defensive team.*

**ARTICLE 5. REFEREE'S TIMEOUT.** Provided that calling timeout is not in conflict with another rule, the Referee may suspend play and stop the clock (Referee's timeout) at any time without penalty to either team when playing time is being consumed because of an unintentional delay. Such situations include, but are not limited to:

- (a) when there is the possibility of a measurement for a first down, or if the Referee is consulting with a captain about one;
- (b) when there is an undue pileup on the runner, or while determining possession after a fumble while time is in;
- (c) when there is an undue delay by officials in spotting the ball for the next snap;
- (d) if the snap is made before the officials can assume their positions (See 4-6-5-b if it is a repeated act);
- (e) when there is an injury to an official or member of the chain crew;
- (f) during an officials' conference; or
- (g) while repairing or replacing game equipment, except player equipment.

After a Referee's timeout, the time remaining on the play clock shall be the same as when it was stopped. The play clock and the game clock will start as if the Referee's timeout had not occurred.

## SECTION 6 DELAY OF GAME

**ARTICLE 1. 40-SECOND PLAY CLOCK.** It is a delay of the game if the ball is not put in play by a snap within 40 seconds after the start of the play clock. The play clock operator shall time the interval between plays upon signals from game officials. The 40-second interval starts when a play ends, unless Article 2 below applies.

**ARTICLE 2. 25-SECOND PLAY CLOCK.** In the event of certain administrative stoppages or other delays, a team will have 25 seconds, beginning with the Referee's whistle, to put the ball in play next by a snap or a kick. Such stoppages include, but are not limited to:

- (a) a change of possession;
- (b) a charged team timeout;
- (c) the two-minute warning;
- (d) the expiration of a period;
- (e) a penalty enforcement;
- (f) a free kick after a television timeout;
- (g) a free kick without a television timeout. Following a Try or successful field goal attempt, teams will have 40 seconds to align prior to the Referee's whistle; or
- (h) replay administration pursuant to Rule 15, Section 3, Article 9, if the play clock is under 25 seconds.

A 25-second interval will be used in these situations, even if the 40-second clock is already counting down.

**ARTICLE 3. INTERRUPTION OF PLAY CLOCK.** If the play clock is stopped prior to the snap for any reason, after the stoppage has concluded, the time remaining on the play clock shall be the same as when it stopped, unless:

- (a) the stoppage has been for a charged team timeout, the two-minute warning, the expiration of a period, or a penalty enforcement, in which case the play clock shall be reset to 25 seconds;
- (b) the stoppage has been for an Instant Replay review that results in a reversal, in which case the play clock shall be reset to 40 seconds, unless another rule requires otherwise;
- (c) the stoppage has been for an excess timeout while time is in that is charged to the defense, in which case the play clock shall be reset to 40 seconds; or
- (d) fewer than 10 seconds remain on the play clock, in which case it shall be reset to 10 seconds, or the exact time on the play clock at the discretion of the Referee.

**ARTICLE 4. BALL REMAINS DEAD.** If the ball is not put in play within the applicable period, the Back Judge shall blow his whistle for the foul, and the ball remains dead. See 14-4-1-Item 1.

**ARTICLE 5. OTHER DELAY OF GAME FOULS.** Other examples of action or inaction that are to be construed as delay of the game include, but are not limited to:

- (a) a player unnecessarily remains on a dead ball or on a runner who has been downed;
- (b) the snapper repeatedly snaps the ball after the neutral zone is established and before all the officials have had a reasonable time to assume their positions (see 7-6-3-c);
- (c) undue delay by either team in assembling after a timeout;
- (d) a defensive player aligned in a stationary position within one yard of the line of scrimmage makes quick and abrupt actions that are not a part of normal defensive player movement and are an obvious attempt to cause an offensive player(s) to foul (false start). The officials shall blow their whistles immediately. If the defender is walking or running toward the line of scrimmage in an effort to time the snap, but stops abruptly because the snap is not made, it is not a foul for delay of game;
- (e) spiking or throwing the ball in the field of play after a down has ended, except after a score;
- (f) intentional contact with the football to delay the snap or the officials' ability to make the ball ready for play; or
- (g) when a timeout is erroneously granted. See 4-5-1 for enforcement.

**Penalty: For delay of the game: Loss of five yards:**

- (a) from the succeeding spot if it occurs between downs. The ball remains dead; or
- (b) from the previous spot if the ball was in play.

## SECTION 7 ACTIONS THAT CONSERVE TIME

**ARTICLE 1. ILLEGAL ACTS.** A team is not permitted to conserve time after the two-minute warning of either half by committing any of these acts:

- (a) a foul by either team that **stops the clock during any dead ball period**;
- (b) intentional grounding;
- (c) an illegal forward pass;
- (d) throwing a backward pass out of bounds; or
- (e) spiking or throwing the ball in the field of play after a down has ended, except after a touchdown.

**Penalty: For illegally conserving time: Loss of five yards unless a larger distance penalty is applicable.**

When actions referred to above are committed by the offensive team while time is in, officials will run off 10 seconds from the game clock and **reset the play clock to 30 seconds** before permitting the ball to be put in play on the ready for play signal. The game clock will start on the ready for play signal unless another rule prescribes otherwise. If the offensive team has timeouts remaining, it will have the option of using a timeout in lieu of a 10-second runoff, in which case the game clock will start on the snap after the timeout. The defense always has the option to decline the 10-second runoff and have the yardage penalty enforced, but if the yardage penalty is declined, the 10-second runoff is also declined, **and the play clock is set to 25 seconds**.



If the action is by the defense, the play clock will be reset to 40 seconds, and the game clock will start on the ready signal, unless the offense chooses to have the clock start on the snap. If the defense has timeouts remaining, it will have the option of using a timeout in lieu of the game clock being started.

**ARTICLE 2. SUBSTITUTION VIOLATION AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING.** After the two-minute warning of either half, if there is a violation of the substitution rule while the ball is dead and time is in, in addition to the applicable yardage penalty for illegal substitution, there will be a 10-second runoff pursuant to Article 1 above.

**Penalty: For illegal substitution: Loss of five yards (unless a larger distance penalty is applicable) and a 10-second runoff.**

**ARTICLE 3. DEFENSIVE FOULS OR INJURIES DURING LAST 40 SECONDS.** In the last 40 seconds of either half, if there is a defensive foul that conserves time or an excess timeout due to injury to a defensive player while time is in, the half will end, unless the defense has timeouts remaining, or the offense chooses to have the game clock start on the snap.

**ARTICLE 4. REPLAY REVIEW AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING OF EITHER HALF.** If a replay review after the two-minute warning of either half results in the on-field ruling being reversed and the correct ruling would not have stopped the game clock, or would have otherwise restarted the game clock before the next snap, the officials will run 10 seconds off the game clock and reset the play clock to 30 seconds before permitting the ball to be put in play on the ready for play signal. Neither team can decline the runoff, but either team can use a remaining timeout to prevent it.

## SECTION 8 EXTENSION OF A PERIOD OR A HALF

**ARTICLE 1. BALL IN PLAY.** If time expires at the end of any period while the ball is in play, the period continues until the down ends.

**ARTICLE 2. PERIOD EXTENDED.** A period may be extended for one untimed down, if any of the following occurs during a down during which time in the period expires, or during which the period had been extended pursuant to this Article:

- (a) If there is a live ball foul by the defensive team that is accepted, the offensive team may choose to extend the period by an untimed down after enforcement of the penalty. If the first or third period is not so extended, any accepted penalty is enforced before the start of the succeeding period.
- (b) If there is a foul by the offense, there shall be no extension of the period. If the foul occurs on the last play of the half, a score by the offense is not counted. However, the period may be extended for an untimed down, upon the request of the defense, if the offensive team's foul or violation is for:
  - (1) illegal touching or first touching of a kick;
  - (2) fair catch interference;
  - (3) a palpably unfair act;
  - (4) a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul committed during a down prior to a safety, an interception of a forward pass, the recovery of a backward pass or fumble, or the offensive team failing to reach the line to gain on fourth down; or
  - (5) a foul by the kicking team prior to a player of the receiving team securing possession of the ball during a down in which there is a safety kick, a scrimmage kick, or a free kick.
- (c) If a touchdown is made on the last play of a period, the Try attempt shall be made (except during a sudden-death period, or if a touchdown is scored during a down in which time in the fourth period expires, and a successful Try would not affect the outcome of the game).
- (d) If no fair catch signal is given and the kickers interfere with the receiver's opportunity to catch a kick, the receiving team may extend the period by a down from scrimmage.
- (e) If a fair catch is signaled and made, the receivers may choose to extend the period by a fair catch kick down (10-2-4). If the first or third period is not so extended, the receivers may start the succeeding period by either a down from scrimmage or fair catch kick (11-4-3).
- (f) If a fair catch is signaled and the kickers interfere with a receiver's opportunity to catch a kick, the receiving team may extend the period by either a down from scrimmage or a fair catch kick (10-2-4).
- (g) If a safety results from a foul during the last play of a half, the score counts. A safety kick is made if requested by the receivers.
- (h) If a double foul occurs during the last down of either half, the period shall be extended by an untimed down.

**Exceptions:** The half is not extended if:

- (1) both fouls are dead ball fouls;
- (2) there is a major-minor double foul ("5 vs. 15"), and the major foul is by the offense, or if the major foul is a dead ball foul by either team;
- (3) The only foul by the defense is a dead ball foul ("clean hands end of half," see 14-4-9-Exc. 3); or
- (4) there is a double foul with a change of possession ("clean hands" rule, see 14-5-2) that does not involve a replay of the down.

If a double foul occurs on the last play of the first or third periods, the period is not extended.

If the first or third period is extended for any reason, or if a touchdown occurs during the last play of such a period, any additional play, including a Try attempt, shall be completed before the teams change goals.

There may be more than one untimed down at the end of a period pursuant to this Article.

## RULE 5 PLAYERS, SUBSTITUTES, EQUIPMENT, GENERAL RULES

### SECTION 1 PLAYERS

**ARTICLE 1. NUMBER OF PLAYERS.** The game is played by two teams of 11 players each.

If Team A has more than 11 players in its formation for more than three seconds, or if Team B has more than 11 players in its formation and the snap is imminent, it is a foul. Once the ball is made ready for play, if either team has more than 11 players in its formation prior to a free kick, it is also a foul. In these instances, game officials shall blow their whistles immediately and not allow the snap or kick to occur.

**Penalty: For more than 11 players in the formation prior to the snap or free kick: Loss of five yards from the succeeding spot.**

If a team has more than 11 players on the field of play or the end zone when a snap, free kick, or fair catch kick is made, the ball is in play, and it is a foul.

**Exception:** If Team A is using a designated holder pursuant to 6-1-1-Note, the designated holder may be the 12th person on the field when the ball is kicked for a kickoff or safety kick, but he is a non-player and must leave the field on his team's sideline immediately after the ball is kicked (5-2-8-e) and is also subject to the rules of non-player conduct in accordance with Rule 13.

**Penalty: For more than 11 players on the field of play or the end zone while the ball is in play: Loss of five yards from the previous spot.**

**ARTICLE 2. PLAYERS NUMBERED BY POSITION.** All players must wear numerals on their jerseys in accordance with Rule 5, Section 4, Article 3, Item 3. Such numerals must be by playing position, as follows:

- (a) quarterbacks: 0-19;
- (b) punters and placekickers: 0-49 and 90-99;
- (c) defensive backs: 0-49;
- (d) running backs, fullbacks, tight ends, H-backs, and wide receivers: 0-49 and 80-89;
- (e) offensive linemen: 50-79;
- (f) defensive linemen: 50-79 and 90-99;
- (g) linebackers: 0-59 and 90-99.

**Eligible pass receivers and a T-Formation Quarterback must be wearing numerals 0-49 or 80-89. All other numerals are worn by ineligible players unless they report a change in their position. See 5-3-1.**

If a player changes his position during his playing career in the NFL, and such change moves him from a position as an ineligible pass receiver to that of an eligible pass receiver, or from a position as an eligible pass receiver to that of an ineligible pass receiver, he must be issued an appropriate new jersey numeral. A change in jersey numeral is not required if the change is from an ineligible position to another ineligible position, or from an eligible position to another eligible position, provided that the player has participated at least one season at his position prior to the change.

Any request to wear a numeral for a special position not specified above must be made to the Commissioner. During the preseason period when playing rosters are larger, the League will allow duplication and other temporary deviations from the numbering scheme specified above, but the rule must be adhered to for all players during the regular season and postseason. Clubs must make numerals available to adhere to the rule, even if it requires returning to circulation a numeral that has been retired or withheld for other reasons. See 5-3-1 for reporting a change of position.

### SECTION 2 SUBSTITUTES AND WITHDRAWN PLAYERS

**ARTICLE 1. NUMBER OF PLAYERS IN HUDDLE.** There can never be more than 11 players in the offensive huddle while the play clock is running. It is a foul, the whistle is blown immediately, and the ball remains dead. See 5-2-8-a.

**ARTICLE 2. SUBSTITUTE BECOMES PLAYER.** A substitute becomes a player when he:

- (a) participates in at least one play (including a play negated by penalty prior to the snap or during the play); or
- (b) is on the field of play or the end zone when a snap, fair catch kick, or free kick is made, or when such a play is imminent.

A player becomes a substitute when he is withdrawn from the game and does not participate in at least one play. A play negated by penalty prior to the snap or during the play counts as a missed play.

**ARTICLE 3. LEGAL SUBSTITUTIONS.** Any number of substitutes may enter the field of play or end zone while the ball is dead.

**ARTICLE 4. ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTIONS.** If a substitute enters the field of play or end zone while the ball is in play, it is an illegal substitution. If an illegal substitute interferes with the play, it may be a palpably unfair act (see 12-3-4).

**ARTICLE 5. OFFENSIVE SUBSTITUTIONS.** The substitution rules are intended to prevent teams from using simulated substitutions to confuse an opponent, while still permitting a player (or players) to enter and leave without participating in a play in certain situations, such as a change in a coaching decision on fourth down, even though he has approached the huddle and communicated with a teammate. Similarly, if a player who participated in the previous play leaves the playing field by mistake, and returns to the playing field prior to the snap, he is not required to reach the inside of the field numerals, provided the defense has the opportunity to match up with him. However, a substitute (i.e., someone who did not participate in the previous play) is required to reach the inside of the field numerals. The following are applicable to any offensive substitute who is entering the game:

- (a) He must move onto the field of play or the end zone as far as the inside of the field numerals prior to the snap to be a legal substitution. If he does not and is on the field of play or end zone at the time of a legal snap, he is an illegal substitute.



- (b) If he approaches the huddle and communicates with a teammate, he is required to participate in at least one play before being withdrawn. After a warning, subsequent violations of this rule shall be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct. See 5-2-11.

**ARTICLE 6. WITHDRAWN PLAYERS.** A player or players who have been replaced must leave the playing field or end zone on their own team's side between the end lines prior to the next snap, free kick, or fair catch kick.

**ARTICLE 7. DISQUALIFIED AND SUSPENDED PLAYERS.** A player must be withdrawn and substituted for when he is disqualified (12-2, 12-3) or suspended (5-4). A suspended player may re-enter after at least one legal snap, provided that the reason for his suspension has been corrected. A disqualified player must leave the playing field enclosure and go to the team locker room within a reasonable time.

**ARTICLE 8. PENALTIES FOR ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTION OR WITHDRAWAL. Penalties are:**

- (a) **For 12 or more players in the offensive huddle (whistle blown immediately and ball remains dead): Loss of five yards from the succeeding spot.**
- (b) **For a substitute entering the field during a live ball: Loss of five yards.**
- (c) **For interference with the play by a substitute who enters the field during a live ball: Palpably unfair act. See 12-3-4.**
- (d) **For an offensive substitute who does not move onto the field as far as the inside of the field numerals: Loss of five yards from the previous spot.**
- (e) **For a withdrawn player or designated holder clearing the field on the opponent's side or across an end line: Loss of five yards from the previous spot.**
- (f) **For illegal return of a suspended player: Loss of five yards from the previous spot if discovery is made while the ball is in play or prior to the start of the next down. If the previous spot is not definitely known, enforcement is five yards from the succeeding spot as a foul between downs. See 14-4-9.**
- (g) **For return of a disqualified player: Loss of 15 yards from the previous spot if discovery is made while the ball is in play, or 15 yards from the succeeding spot if discovered between downs, and, in either case, exclusion from the playing field enclosure.**

**ARTICLE 9. PROCEDURE FOLLOWING TIMEOUT OR CHANGE OF POSSESSION.** Following a timeout or change of possession, the offense may huddle outside the numbers near its bench area, but will not be allowed to line up and snap the ball before the defense has an opportunity to match personnel. If the offense snaps the ball before the defense has had an opportunity to complete its substitutions, and a defensive foul for too many players on the field results, no penalties will be enforced, except for personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, and the down will be replayed. At this time, the Referee will notify the head coach that any further use of this tactic will result in a penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct.

**Penalty: For unsportsmanlike conduct after a warning: Loss of 15 yards from the succeeding spot.**

**ARTICLE 10. DEFENSIVE MATCHUPS FOLLOWING SUBSTITUTIONS.** If a substitution is made by the offense before the two-minute warning of either half, the offense shall not be permitted to snap the ball until the defense has been permitted to respond with its substitutions. While in the process of a substitution (or simulated substitution), the offense is prohibited from rushing quickly to the line of scrimmage and snapping the ball in an obvious attempt to cause a defensive foul (i.e., too many men on the field). If the offense substitutes, the following procedure will apply:

- (a) The Umpire will stand over the ball until the Referee deems that the defense has had a reasonable time to complete its substitutions.
- (b) If the offense snaps the ball before the defense has had an opportunity to complete its substitutions, and a defensive foul for too many players on the field results, no penalties will be enforced, except for personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct, and the down will be replayed. At this time, the Referee will notify the head coach that any further use of this tactic will result in a penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct. The game clock will be reset to the time remaining when the snap occurred, and the clock will start on the snap.
- (c) On a fourth-down punting situation, the Referee and the Umpire will not allow a quick snap that prevents the defense from having a reasonable time to complete its substitutions. This applies throughout the entire game.
- (d) If the play clock expires before the defense has completed its substitution, it is delay of game by the offense.

**ARTICLE 11. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT.** Using entering substitutes, legally returning players, substitutes on sidelines, or withdrawn players to confuse opponents, or lingering by players leaving the field when being replaced by a substitute, is unsportsmanlike conduct. See 12-3-1-k. The offense is prevented from sending simulated substitutions onto the field toward its huddle and returning them to the sideline without completing the substitution in an attempt to confuse the defense.

**Penalty: For unsportsmanlike conduct: Loss of 15 yards.**

### SECTION 3 CHANGES IN POSITION

**ARTICLE 1. REPORTING CHANGE OF POSITION.** An offensive player wearing the number of an ineligible pass receiver (50–79 and 90–99) is permitted to line up in the position of an eligible pass receiver or T-Formation Quarterback (0–49 and 80–89). An offensive player wearing the number of an eligible pass receiver is permitted to line up in the position of an ineligible pass receiver, provided he lines up within the normal five-player core formed by ineligible players and is not more than two players removed from the middle player of a seven-player line.

In both cases, the player must immediately report the change in his eligibility status to the Referee, who will inform the defensive team. He must participate in such eligible or ineligible position as long as he is continuously in the game, but prior to each play he must again report his status to the Referee, who will inform the defensive team. The game clock shall not be stopped, and the ball shall not be put in play until the Referee takes his normal position.

**ARTICLE 2. RETURNING TO ORIGINAL POSITION.** A player who has reported a change in his eligibility status to the Referee is permitted to return to a position indicated by the eligibility status of his number after:

- (a) a team time out;
- (b) the end of a quarter;
- (c) the two-minute warning;
- (d) a foul;
- (e) a replay review;
- (f) a touchdown;
- (g) a kick from scrimmage;
- (h) a change of possession; or
- (i) the player has been withdrawn for one legal snap.

**Penalty: For a player failing to notify the Referee of a change in his status when required, or an offensive player with an eligible number reports as ineligible and lines up outside normal five-player core: Loss of five yards for illegal substitution.**

**ARTICLE 3. SPEAKERS IN HELMETS.** The Coach-to-Player system allows a member of the coaching staff in the bench area or the coaches' booth to communicate to a designated offensive or defensive player with a speaker in his helmet. The communication begins once a game official has signaled a down to be over and is cut off when the play clock reaches 15 seconds or the ball is snapped, whichever occurs first.

Each offensive and defensive team is permitted no more than one player on the field with a speaker in his helmet. Each team is permitted to have a maximum of three active radio receivers to be used on offense by its quarterbacks, and a maximum of three active radio receivers to be used on defense by players who have been designated as a primary and backup users.

Clubs that have a player whose principal position is as a non-quarterback (e.g., wide receiver, running back) and who also is used as a quarterback from time to time must have two helmets for that player—one with and one without radio components.

When a quarterback enters the game for the first time or re-enters the game if he has previously been in the game and removed, he must report to the Referee.

Whenever the backup defensive user enters or re-enters the game wearing a helmet with a speaker, he must report to the Umpire. If the primary defensive user subsequently re-enters the game wearing a helmet with a speaker, he must report to the Umpire. If the primary and backup players have been removed from the game, no other player may wear the radio speaker in his helmet. Teams must use other methods to communicate signals to their players.

It is not necessary that the offensive player with the speaker in his helmet receive the snap.

For special teams' plays, only one player per team with a receiver will be permitted on the field.

All players that have radio components in their helmet must have a decal, supplied by the League, displayed on the midline of the rear of the helmet. Players who have speakers in their helmets must be identified in the Communication System section of the Game Day Administration Report that is submitted to the Referee or a member of his crew no later than one hour and 30 minutes prior to kickoff.

For additional requirements and policies pertaining to the system, including regulations for the storage of a backup helmet for a non-quarterback who is used as a quarterback, or for the backup defensive player's helmet, please refer to the *Policy Manual for Member Clubs/Game Operations*.

**Penalty: For a player failing to notify the Referee or Umpire of a change in his status when required: Loss of five yards for illegal substitution.**

## **SECTION 4 EQUIPMENT, UNIFORMS, PLAYER APPEARANCE**

**ARTICLE 1. GENERAL POLICY.** Throughout the game day period while in view of the stadium and television audience, including during team pregame warm-ups, all players must dress in a professional manner under the uniform standards. The helmet and mandatory padding referenced in Article 3 below are intended to provide reasonable protection to a player while reasonably avoiding risk of injury to other players. The development of Playing Rules should be governed by this Article. Players generally must present an appearance that is appropriate to representing their individual clubs and the National Football League. The term uniform, as used in this policy, applies to every piece of equipment worn by a player, including helmet, shoulder pads, thigh pads, knee pads, and any other item of protective gear, and to every visible item of apparel, including but not limited to pants, jerseys, wristbands, gloves, game socks and/or leg coverings, shoes, visible undergarments, and accessories such as headwear worn under helmets and hand towels. All visible items worn on game day by players must be issued by the club or the League, or, if from outside sources, must have approval in advance by the League office.

**ARTICLE 2. TEAM COLORS.** Pursuant to the official colors established for each NFL club in the League Constitution and Bylaws, playing squads are permitted to wear only those colors or a combination of those colors for helmets, jerseys, pants, and game socks and/or leg coverings; provided that white is also an available color for jerseys and mandatory color for the lower portion of game socks and/or leg coverings. (See 5-4-3-Item 6, "Game socks and/or Leg Coverings," below). Each player on a given team must wear the same colors on his uniform as all other players on his team in the same game. Home clubs shall choose their jersey color (either white or official team color) and visiting clubs must wear the opposite. The two competing teams may wear jerseys in their official colors (non-white), provided the Commissioner determines that such colors are of sufficient contrast.

**ARTICLE 3. MANDATORY EQUIPMENT, APPAREL.** All players must wear the equipment and uniform apparel listed below, which must be of a suitably protective nature and must be designed and produced by a professional football equipment manufacturer. All components recommended by the manufacturer must be present and must not be cut, reduced in size, or otherwise altered unless for medical reasons approved in advance by the Commissioner. During pregame team warm-ups, players may omit certain protective equipment at their option, except that helmets, shoulder pads, thigh pads, and knee pads must be worn.

**Item 1. Helmet, Face Protectors.** Helmet with all points of the chin strap (white only) fastened and facemask attached. Facemasks must not be more than 5/8-inch in diameter and must be made of rounded material; transparent materials are prohibited. Clear (transparent) plastic eye shields are optional. Tinted eye shields may be worn only after the League office is supplied with appropriate medical documentation and approval is subsequently granted. The League office has final approval. No visible identification of a manufacturer's name or logo on the exterior of a helmet or on any attachment to a helmet is permitted unless provided for under a commercial arrangement between the League and manufacturer; in no event is identification of any helmet manufacturer permitted on the visible surface of a rear cervical pad. All helmets must carry a small NFL shield logo on the rear lower-left exterior, and an approved warning label on the rear lower-right exterior. Both labels will be supplied in quantity by the League office.

**Item 2. Jerseys.** Jersey must cover all pads and other protective equipment worn on the torso and upper arms, and must be appropriately tailored to remain tucked into the uniform pants throughout the game. Jerseys are permitted to be hemmed but the length must be long enough to cover the waist area. Skin exposure due to improperly wearing jerseys is prohibited at all times throughout the game. Tear-away jerseys are prohibited. Mesh jerseys with large fishnet material (commonly referred to as "bullet-hole" or "port-hole" mesh) are also prohibited. Surnames of players in letters a minimum of 2½ inches high must be affixed to the exterior of jerseys across the upper back above the numerals; nicknames are prohibited. All jerseys must carry a small NFL Shield logo at the middle of the yoke of the neck on the front of the garment. All fabrics must be approved by the League office prior to production. For optional equipment permitted to be worn under jerseys, see 5-4-6 Item 1, "Garments Under Jersey" below.

**Item 3. Numerals.** Numerals on the back and front of jerseys as specified under NFL rules for the player's specific position. Such numerals must be a minimum of 8 inches high and 4 inches wide, and their color must be in sharp contrast with the color of the jersey. Smaller numerals should be worn on the tops of the shoulders or upper arms of the jersey. Small numerals on the back of the helmet or on the uniform pants are optional.

**Item 4. Pants.** Pants must be worn over the entire knee area; pants shortened or rolled up are prohibited. No part of the pants may be cut away unless an appropriate gusset or other device is used to replace the removed material. All pants must carry a small NFL Shield logo on the front left groin area of the pants, midway between the fly opening and side seam, and ½-inch below the belt.

**Item 5. Shoulder Pads, Thigh Pads, and Knee Pads.** All players must wear shoulder pads, thigh pads, and knee pads which have been approved by the League office. All pads must be covered by the outer uniform. Knee pads must be at least ¼-inch thick and must cover the knees. Basketball-type knee pads are permitted but must be covered by the outer uniform. Punters and placekickers may omit thigh and knee pads.

**Item 6. Game Socks and/or Leg Coverings.** Game socks and/or leg coverings must cover the entire area from the shoe to the bottom of the pants and must meet the pants below the knee. Players are permitted to wear as many layers of game socks and/or leg coverings and tape on the lower leg as they prefer, provided the exterior is either a: (a) one-piece game sock and/or leg covering that includes solid white from the top of the shoe to the mid-point of the lower leg, and approved team color or colors (non-white) from that point to the top of the game sock and/or leg covering; or (b) solid color game sock and/or leg covering (i.e., entire covering from bottom of pant leg to top of shoe), but all players must be in the same covering style and color in any particular game. Solid game socks and/or leg coverings must be a consistent color from the bottom of the pant leg to the top of the shoe. Uniform game socks and/or leg coverings may not be altered (e.g., over-stretched, cut at the toes, or sewn short) in order to bring the line between solid white and team colors lower or higher than the mid-point of the lower leg. Skin exposure of the lower leg and ankle area due to improper wear of game socks and/or leg coverings is prohibited at all times throughout the game. No other game socks and/or leg coverings, and/or opaque tape, may be worn over the one-piece, two-color uniform game socks. Barefoot punters and placekickers may omit the game sock and/or leg covering of the kicking foot in preparation for and during kicking plays.

**Item 7. Shoes.** Shoes must be of standard football design, including "sneaker" type shoes such as basketball shoes, cross-training shoes, etc. A player may wear shoes that are black, white, or any Constitutional team color, or any combination of black, white, and a Constitutional team color. Each player may select among shoe styles previously approved by the League office. Logos, names, or other commercial identification on shoes are not permitted to be visible unless advance approval is granted by the League office. Size and location of logos and names on shoes must be approved by the League office. When a shoe logo or name approved by the League is covered with an appropriate use of tape, players will be allowed to cut out the tape covering the original logo or name, provided the cut is clean and is the exact size of the logo or name. The logo or name of the shoe manufacturer must not be re-applied to the exterior of taped shoes unless advance approval is granted by the League office. Kicking shoes must not be modified (including using a shoelace wrapped around toe and/or bottom of the shoe), and any shoe that is worn by a player with an artificial limb on his kicking leg must have a kicking surface that conforms to that of a normal kicking shoe. Punters and placekickers may omit the shoe from the kicking foot in preparation for and during kicking plays.

**ARTICLE 4. OTHER PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT, APPAREL.** In addition to the prohibited items of equipment and apparel specified above, the following also are prohibited:

**Item 1. Projecting Objects.** Metal or other hard objects that project from a player's person or uniform, including from his shoes.

**Item 2. Uncovered Hard Objects, Substances.** Hard objects, exposed jewelry, and substances, including but not limited to casts, guards or braces for hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, hip, thigh, knee, and shin, unless such items are appropriately covered on all edges and surfaces by a minimum of 3/8-inch foam rubber or similar soft material. Any such item worn to protect an injury must not contain colors, designs, logos, or personal messages that are not approved by the NFL and must be reported by the applicable coaching staff to the Umpire in advance of the game, and a description of the injury must be provided.

**Item 3. Torn Items.** Torn or improperly fitting equipment creating a risk of injury to other players, e.g., the hard surfaces of shoulder pads exposed by a damaged jersey.

**Item 4. Improper Cleats.** Shoe cleats made of metal or other material that may chip, fracture, or develop a cutting edge. Conical cleats with concave sides or points which measure less than 3/8-inch in diameter at the tips, or cleats with oblong ends which measure less than 1/4 by 3/4-inch at the end tips are also prohibited. Nylon cleats with flat steel tips are permitted. A detachable kicking toe is prohibited.

**Item 5. Improper Tape.** Opaque, contrasting-color tape that covers any part of the helmet, jersey, pants, game socks and/or leg coverings, or shoes; transparent tape or tape of the same color as the background material is permissible for use on these items of apparel. Players may use opaque white, black or one dominant club color tape on hands and arms, provided it conforms to above ("Uncovered Hard Objects, Substances") and below ("Approved Glove Color"). Opaque tape either black or white on shoes is permitted, provided it is black or white to match the selected dominant shoe choice of the club and provided it does not carry up into the game sock and/or leg covering area.

**Item 6. Items Colored Like Football.** Headgear or any other equipment or apparel which, in the opinion of the Referee, may confuse an opponent because of its similarity in color to that of the game football. If such color is worn, it must be broken by stripes or other patterns of sharply contrasting color or colors.

**Item 7. Adhesive, Slippery Substances.** Adhesive or slippery substances on the body, equipment, or uniform of any player; provided, however, that players may wear gloves with a tackified surface if such tacky substance does not adhere to the football or otherwise cause handling problems for players.

**ARTICLE 5. RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT.** It is recommended that all players wear hip pads designed to reasonably avoid the risk of injury. Unless otherwise provided by individual team policy, it is the players' responsibility and decision whether to follow this recommendation and use such pads. If worn, such pads must be covered by the outer uniform.

**ARTICLE 6. OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT.** Among the types of optional equipment that are permitted to be worn by players are the following:

**Item 1. Garments Under Jerseys.** Quarterbacks will be allowed to wear under the game jersey a solid-colored T-shirt, turtleneck, or sweatshirt (consistent with team undergarment color) with sleeves cut to any length, as long as both sleeves are evenly trimmed, and the edges are sewn and hemmed. All other players may wear garments under game jerseys only if the undergarment sleeves either (a) are full length to the wrist; or (b) are the half sleeve length as provided by the licensee each of which must be approved by the NFL. Players may not wear long-sleeved undergarments that include pebble-grip sleeves. Undergarments should be tucked in the uniform pants. Any undergarment that is untucked must not hang out from the bottom of the jersey in length longer than the small NFL Shield logo and the manufacturer's logo located on the front area of the uniform pants, or the undergarment must be tucked in the uniform pants. Any garments under jerseys that are exposed at any point throughout the game and that carry an exposed logo or commercial name/identification must be licensed and approved by the League office for wear on the field. All members of the same team who wear approved undergarments with exposed necks or sleeves must wear the same color on a given day, which color must be white or a solid color that is an official team color (solid means that sleeves must not carry stripes, designs, or team names). Players may not wear undergarments with an exposed hood hanging outside the collar of the jersey.

**Item 2. Approved Glove Color.** Gloves, wrappings, elbow pads, and other items worn on the arms below or over the jersey sleeves must be white, black or the official uniform color of the applicable team. Clubs are not required to designate to the League office the color of gloves that will be worn by their players.

**Item 3. Rib Protectors.** Rib protectors ("flak jackets") under the jersey.

**Item 4. Wristbands.** Wristbands, provided they are white, black, or an official uniform color of the applicable team only.

**Item 5. Towels.** Towels, provided they are white, or the player's team's primary colors (other than yellow or red), licensed towels approved by the League office for use on the playing field. Players are prohibited from adding to these towels personal messages, logos, names, symbols, or illustrations. Such towels also must be attached to or tucked into the front waist of the pants and must be no longer than 6 by 8 inches (slightly larger size may be issued to quarterbacks, or may be folded to these limits for wearing in games). A player may wear no more than one towel. Players are prohibited from discarding on the playing field any loose towels or other materials used for wiping hands and the football. Streamers or ribbons, regardless of length, hanging from any part of the uniform, including the helmet, are prohibited.

**Item 6. Headwear.** When players are on the field during the pregame, game, and postgame periods, they may wear approved caps, skull caps and bands, approved cold weather gear, or other approved headwear for medical purposes only, as determined by the Commissioner. Any permissible headwear must be approved by the League office, and if worn under the helmet, no portion may hang from or otherwise be visible outside the helmet. Players are not permitted to wear bandannas or other unapproved headwear anywhere on the field during the pregame, game, or postgame periods, even if such items are worn under their helmets.

**ARTICLE 7. LOGOS AND COMMERCIAL IDENTIFICATION.** Throughout the period on game day that a player is visible to the stadium and television audience (including in pregame warm-ups, in the bench area, and during postgame interviews in the locker room or on the field), players are prohibited from wearing, displaying, or orally promoting equipment, apparel, or other items that carry commercial names or logos/identifications of companies, unless such commercial identification has been approved in

advance by the League office. The size of any approved logo or other commercial identification involved in an agreement between a manufacturer and the League will be modest and unobtrusive, and there is no assurance that it will be visible to the television audience.

**ARTICLE 8. PERSONAL MESSAGES.** Throughout the period on game day that a player is visible to the stadium and television audience (including in pregame warm-ups, in the bench area, and during postgame interviews in the locker room or on the field), players are prohibited from wearing, displaying, or otherwise conveying personal messages either in writing or illustration, unless such message has been approved in advance by the League office. Items to celebrate anniversaries or memorable events, or to honor or commemorate individuals, such as helmet decals, and arm bands and jersey patches on players' uniforms, are prohibited unless approved in advance by the League office. All such items approved by the League office, if any, must relate to team or League events or personages. The League will not grant permission for any club or player to wear, display, or otherwise convey messages, through helmet decals, arm bands, jersey patches, mouthpieces, or other items affixed to game uniforms or equipment, which relate to political activities or causes, other non-football events, causes or campaigns, or charitable causes or campaigns. Further, any such approved items must be modest in size, tasteful, non-commercial, and non-controversial; must not be worn for more than one football season; and if approved for use by a specific team, must not be worn by players on other teams in the League.

**ARTICLE 9. GENERAL APPEARANCE.** Consistent with the equipment and uniform rules, players must otherwise present a professional and appropriate appearance while before the public on game day. Among the types of activity that are prohibited are use of tobacco products (smokeless included) while in the bench area and use of facial makeup. In addition to the game day penalties described in this rule, the Commissioner may subsequently impose independent disciplinary action on the club and involved player, up to and including suspension from the team's next game – preseason, regular season, or postseason, whichever is applicable.

**Penalties:**

- a) For violation of this Section 4 discovered during pregame warm-ups or at other times prior to the game, player will be advised to make appropriate correction; if the violation is not corrected, player will not be permitted to enter the game.
- b) For violation of this Section 4 that is discovered while player is in the game, and which involves the competitive or player safety aspects of the game (e.g., illegal kicking toe of shoe, an adhesive or slippery substance, failure to wear mandatory equipment), player will be removed from the game until he has complied.
- c) For any other violation of this Section 4 (e.g., wristbands and mouthpieces that are not League-approved, towel with a personal message, impermissible headwear under the helmet) that is discovered while the player is in the game, player will be advised to make appropriate correction at the next change of possession; if the violation is not corrected, player will not be permitted to enter the game.
- d) For violation of this Section 4 detected in the bench area: Player and head coach will be asked to remove the objectionable item, properly equip the player, or otherwise correct the violation. The involved player or players will not be permitted to enter the game until the player has complied.
- e) For illegal entry or return of a player suspended under this Section 4: Loss of five yards from succeeding spot and removal until properly equipped after one down. See 3-32.
- f) For repeat violation: Disqualification from game.

**Notes:**

- (1) If a player is suspended for having adhesive or slippery substances on his body, equipment, or uniform, he must remain out of the game for one play, even if there is a team time out, the two-minute warning, or the end of a period.
- (2) If a player (kicker) is suspended for having an illegal kicking shoe, he must remain out of the game for one play, unless there is a team time out, the two-minute warning, or the end of the period.

## RULE 6 FREE KICKS

### SECTION 1 PROCEDURES FOR A FREE KICK

**ARTICLE 1. FREE KICK.** A free kick is a kickoff, safety kick, or onside kick that puts the ball in play to start a free kick down. It must be made from any point on the kicking team's restraining line and between the inbounds lines.

- (a) A kickoff puts the ball in play at the start of each half, after a Try, and after a successful field goal. A drop kick or place kick may be used for a kickoff.
- (b) A safety kick puts the ball in play after a safety. A drop kick, place kick, or punt may be used for a safety kick. A tee may be used for a safety kick.
- (c) An onside kick puts the ball in play in the fourth period by the team who is trailing in the game and declares that form of a free kick to the officials. A holder can be used for an onside kick. See 6-1-6 and 6-2-2 below.

**Note:** During a free kick, the kicking team may use a manufactured tee designed to hold the ball no more than one inch from the ground and approved by the League. Nothing, including a holder or designated holder, can be used to elevate the ball more than one inch above the ground. Once the ball has been placed on the kicking tee, the kicking tee cannot be moved. If the ball falls off the tee, the covering officials must stop play and restart the timing process without penalty to the kicking team. If the ball falls off the tee a second time during the same free kick down, the kicking team then must kick it off the tee with the use of a designated holder during a kickoff or safety kick, or with a holder during an onside kick. The designated holder during a kickoff or safety kick shall be a uniformed member of the kicking team and may be the 12<sup>th</sup> person on the field, but he is a non-player, must leave the field on his team's sideline immediately after the ball is kicked (5-2-8-e), and is also subject to the rules of non-player conduct in accordance with Rule 13. The ball may be placed on the ground leaning against the tee, provided the tee is in its normal upright position.

**Penalty: For illegal free kick: Loss of five yards.**

**ARTICLE 2. RESTRAINING LINES AND ZONES.** The restraining lines and applicable zones for a kickoff or safety kick shall be as follows:

- (a) "Kicker's Restraining Line" - the restraining line for the kick by the kicking team shall be its 35-yard line for a kickoff and its 20-yard line for a safety kick unless it is adjusted because of a distance penalty.
- (b) "Kicking Team's Restraining Line" - the restraining line for the remaining 10 players of the kicking team shall be the receiving team's 40-yard line.
- (c) "Receiving Team's Restraining Line" - the restraining line for the receiving team shall be the receiving team's 35-yard line.
- (d) The "setup zone" for the receiving team is the 5-yard area between the receiving team's 35-yard line and its 30-yard line. See Article 6 below for the setup zone for an onside kick.
- (e) The "landing zone" shall be the area from the receiving team's 20-yard line extending to its goal line.

**ARTICLE 3. KICKOFF OR SAFETY KICK FORMATION.** From the time the kicker begins his approach to the ball and until the ball touches the ground or a player in the landing zone or the end zone:

- (a) All kicking team players must be inbounds and:
  - (1) all kicking team players other than the kicker must be lined up with their front foot on the kicking team's restraining line, and both feet must remain on the ground;
  - (2) at least two players must be lined up inbounds between the sideline and the bottom (outside) of the yard-line number, at least two players must be lined up between the top (inside) of the yard-line number and the inbounds lines, and at least two players must be lined up inside the inbounds lines.
  - (3) the kicker may be beyond the kicker's restraining line, provided his kicking foot is not beyond the line.
  - (4) after the kick, the kicker may not cross the vicinity of the 50-yard line until the ball touches the ground or player in the landing zone or the end zone.
- (b) All receiving team players must be inbounds and on or behind their restraining line, and at least nine players must be positioned in the setup zone. The following applies to the receiving team players in the setup zone:
  - (1) **Players on Restraining Line.** At least seven of the players must be lined up with their front foot on the receiving team's restraining line. If the receiving team elects to have more than nine players in the setup zone, then at least eight players must be lined up with their front foot on the receiving team's restraining line.
    - a. At least one of the players must be lined up between the inbounds lines.
    - b. At least one of the players must be lined up between the top (inside) of the yard-line number and the inbounds line on each side of the field.
    - c. At least one of the players must be lined up between the sideline and the bottom (outside) of the yard-line number on each side of the field.
  - (2) **Remaining Players in the Setup Zone (Not on Restraining Line).** Any players not lined up on the Restraining Line must be lined up between the sidelines and the inbounds lines.
  - (3) At least three players must be lined up outside the inbounds line on each side of the field.
  - (4) All receiving team players lined up outside the setup zone must remain behind the receiving team's 20-yard line until the ball is kicked and behind the receiving team's 30-yard line until the ball lands or is touched by a receiving team player in the landing zone or end zone.
- (c) All players of the kicking team other than the kicker, and all receiving team players in the setup zone, must have both feet remain on the ground.
- (d) Once the kicking team is lined up in a stationary position, the receiving team shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to line up in the setup zone.

**Penalty: For a player being beyond the restraining line when the ball is kicked (offside), a player being out of bounds when the ball is kicked, either team being in an illegal formation when the ball is kicked, kicking team players (other than**



**the kicker) or receiving team players in the setup zone moving before permitted, or kicker moving beyond 15 yards from the kicker's restraining line before permitted (illegal formation): Loss of five yards.**

**ARTICLE 4. CATCH OR RECOVERY OF A KICKOFF OR SAFETY KICK.** The following applies to the catch or recovery of a kickoff or safety kick:

- (a) If a player of the receiving team catches or recovers the ball in the landing zone or inbounds in the end zone, he may advance.
- (b) If the ball is declared dead while in the simultaneous possession of two opposing players, the ball is awarded to the receiving team.
- (c) A player of the kicking team may touch, catch, or recover the ball if it lands or is touched by a receiving team player in the landing zone or in the end zone.
- (d) The ball is dead if:
  - (1) it is caught or recovered by a player of the kicking team. If the catch or recovery is legal, the ball belongs to the kicking team at the dead ball spot.
  - (2) it is downed by the receiving team in the end zone or goes out of bounds in the end zone (touchback).
  - (3) it first touches the ground or a player in advance of the front yard line of the landing zone.
- (e) If the live ball comes to rest anywhere in the landing zone or in the end zone, and no player attempts to possess it, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team at the dead ball spot.

**ARTICLE 5. KICKOFF OR SAFETY KICK CROSSES GOAL LINE.** A kickoff or safety kick into the end zone that remains inbounds is a live ball and must be returned or downed by the receiving team. It is a touchback and the dead ball spot is the 20-yard line if a kickoff or a safety kick:

- (a) touches the ground or a player in the landing zone and is downed in the end zone by the receiving team or goes out of bounds behind the receiving team's goal line;

The dead ball spot is the 30-yard line if, without first touching the ground or a player in the landing zone, a kickoff or safety kick:

- (b) goes out of bounds behind the receiving team's goal line;
- (c) strikes the receiving team's goal post, uprights, or cross bar; or
- (d) lands at or beyond the goal line and is downed in the end zone by the receiving team.

**ARTICLE 6. ONSIDE KICK.** At any time during the fourth period, the kicking team, if trailing its opponent, may declare an onside kick by notifying the Referee prior to the start of the play clock (25-second play clock after the Back Judge hands the kicker the ball). The Referee will then notify the receiving team before starting the play clock and the following rules will apply:

- (a) An onside kick is defined as a free kick that the kicking team attempts to legally recover from the kicking team's restraining line to the furthest point downfield within the onside kick setup zone (See definition of onside kick setup zone in (h) below).
- (b) The restraining line for the kicking team on an onside kick is the kicking team's 35-yard line or the kicking team's 20-yard line for a safety kick unless either line is adjusted because of a distance penalty.
- (c) The following applies to kicking team players other than the kicker from the time the kicker begins his approach to the ball and until the ball is kicked:
  - (1) All kicking team players other than the kicker must be lined up with at least one foot on the yard line that is one yard behind the kicking team's restraining line, and both feet must remain on the ground until the ball is kicked; and
  - (2) No more than five players of the kicking team may be on either side of the ball with the holder counting as one of the five on either side; and
  - (3) On each side of the ball, at least two players (other than a holder) must be lined up inbounds between the sideline and the bottom (outside) of the yard-line number, and at least two players (other than a holder) must be lined up between the top (inside) of the yard-line number and the inbounds lines.
- (d) All kicking team players must be inbounds and behind the ball when it is kicked, except:
  - (1) The holder of a place kick may be beyond the line, and
  - (2) The kicker may be beyond the line, provided that his kicking foot is not beyond the line.
- (e) A player of the kicking team may legally touch, catch, or recover the ball if:
  - (1) It first touches a receiving team player; or
  - (2) It reaches or crosses the receiving team's restraining line.
- (f) The ball is dead if it is caught or recovered by a player of the kicking team. If the catch or recovery is legal, the ball belongs to the kicking team at the dead ball spot.
- (g) The restraining line for the receiving team shall be the yard line 10 yards in advance of the kicking team's restraining line.
- (h) Until the ball is kicked, all receiving team players must be inbounds and behind their restraining line, and at least eight, but no more than nine, players must be positioned between their restraining line and a spot 15 yards behind their restraining line (the "onside kick setup zone").
- (i) If a player of the receiving team catches or recovers the ball, he may advance.
- (j) If the ball comes to rest anywhere on the field, and no player attempts to possess it, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team at the dead ball spot.
- (k) If the onside kick goes untouched beyond the onside kick setup zone, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team.

**Notes:**

- (1) A player is deemed to have not touched the ball if it is batted or illegally kicked into him by an opponent. Such touching is ignored, though the bat or kick could be a foul for an illegal bat or illegal kick.
- (2) For illegal catch or recovery, see 6-2-5.

**Penalty:** For a player being beyond the restraining line when the ball is kicked (offside), a player being out of bounds when the ball is kicked, or either team being in an illegal formation when the ball is kicked: **Loss of 5 yards.**

**Penalty:** For an onside kick that goes untouched beyond the onside kick setup zone: **Loss of 15 yards from the kicking team's restraining line and the receiving team takes possession.**

**ARTICLE 7. END OF FREE KICK.** A free kick ends when either team possesses the ball, or when the ball is dead, if that precedes possession. A running play begins when the receiving team establishes possession of the ball.

## SECTION 2 OTHER FREE KICK FOULS

### ARTICLE 1. BLOCKING DURING A KICKOFF OR SAFETY KICK.

**Item 1. Kicking Team.** After the ball hits or is touched in the landing zone or end zone, a kicking team player may legally block an opponent, and he may use his hands and arms to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball or a receiver who is actively attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield. During the kick, the kicking team is subject to the blocking restrictions of the defense.

#### Item 2. Receiving Team.

- (a) Until the ball hits or is touched in the landing zone or end zone, no player of the receiving team may initiate a block against the kicking team.
- (b) During the kick, receiving team players are subject to the blocking restrictions of the offense (see 12-1-1 through 12-1-3), and they may use their hands/arms legally to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball.

**Penalty:** For illegal blocking or use of hands by either team: **Loss of 10 yards.**

- (c) A "double team block" is permissible only by players who were initially lined up in the setup zone at the time of the kick. A double team block is defined as two or more players who contact an opponent at the same time. Any other players may not participate in a double team block at any time during a kick or during a return.
- (d) A "wedge block" is not permitted by any players at any time. A wedge block is defined as two or more players intentionally aligning shoulder-to-shoulder within two yards of each other, and who move forward together. The foul for a wedge block occurs at that point; actual contact with an opponent is not necessary.

**Penalty:** For an illegal wedge block or an illegal double team block: **Loss of 15 yards. If the foul occurs during the kick, enforcement is from the spot of the foul. If the foul occurs during the return, the penalty is enforced as customary. If the foul occurs in the receiving team's end zone during the kick, it is enforced from the previous spot.**

### ARTICLE 2. BLOCKING DURING ONSIDE KICK.

#### Item 1. Kicking Team.

- (a) **Between the Restraining Lines (10 Yards).** Until the ball is legally touched, a kicking team player may not block or use his hands or arms against an opponent between the restraining lines, except to push or pull aside a receiver who is actively attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield. After the ball is legally touched, a kicking team player may legally block an opponent, and he may use his hands and arms to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball or a receiver who is actively attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield.
- (b) **At or Five Yards Beyond Receiving Team's Restraining Line (Next Five Yards).** Until the ball is legally touched or touches the ground, a kicking team player may not block or use his hands or arms against an opponent in the area that is at or no more than five yards beyond the receiving team's restraining line, except to push or pull aside a receiver who is actively attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield. After the ball is legally touched or touches the ground, a kicking team player may legally block an opponent anywhere, and he may use his hands and arms to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball.
- (c) **More than 15 Yards Beyond Kicking Team's Restraining Line.** The kicking team may legally block more than 15 yards beyond its restraining line.

#### Item 2. Receiving Team.

- (a) **First 15 Yards.** Until the ball is legally touched or the ball hits the ground no player on the receiving team may initiate a block against the kicking team in the 15-yard area between the kicking team's restraining line and five yards behind the receiving team's restraining line.
- (b) **More than 15 Yards Beyond Kicking Team's Restraining Line.** The receiving team may legally block more than 15 yards beyond the kicking team's restraining line.
- (c) After the ball is kicked, receiving team players are subject to the blocking restrictions of the offense (see 12-1-1 through 12-1-3), and they may use their hands/arms legally to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball.
- (d) **Double Team and Wedge Blocks.** Restrictions in Article 1, Item 2(c) and (d) above and penalty enforcement for those blocks also apply to onside kicks.

**Penalty:** For illegal blocking on an onside kick or use of hands by either team: **Loss of 10 yards.**

**ARTICLE 3. RUNNING INTO FREE KICKER.** A player of the receiving team is not permitted to run into the kicker before he recovers his balance. See also 12-2-8-i for personal fouls against the kicker.

**Penalty:** For running into the kicker: **Loss of five yards.**

**ARTICLE 4. FREE KICK OUT OF BOUNDS OR NOT REACHING THE LANDING ZONE.** The kicking team may not (a) kick the ball out of bounds (b) be the last to touch the ball before it goes out of bounds between the goal lines, or (c) kick the ball which first touches the ground or a player in advance of the front yard line of the landing zone. If the receiving team is the last to touch the ball before it goes out of bounds, the receiving team puts the ball in play at the inbounds spot.



**Penalty:** For a kickoff or onside kick out of bounds **or a kickoff that lands or is touched in advance of the front yard line of the landing zone:** The receiving team may elect to take possession of the ball 25 yards from the spot of the kick at the inbounds line on the side of the field where the ball went out of bounds **or lands or is touched short of the landing zone, at the out of bounds spot, or at the spot where the ball lands or is touched in advance of the front yard line of the landing zone if less than 25 yards.**

**Penalty:** For a safety kick out of bounds **or a safety kick that lands or is touched in advance of the front yard line of the landing zone:** The receiving team may elect to take possession of the ball 30 yards from the spot of the kick at the inbounds line on the side of the field where the ball went out of bounds **or lands or is touched short of the landing zone, at the out of bounds spot, or at the spot where the ball lands or is touched in advance of the front yard line of the landing zone if less than 30 yards.**

#### **ARTICLE 5. FREE KICK ILLEGALLY TOUCHED.**

**Item 1. Ball Reaches Restraining Line During Onside Kick.** A player of the kicking team may not touch, catch, or recover the ball before it has reached the receiving team's restraining line, unless it has first been touched by a receiving team player.

**Penalty:** For illegal touching **of an onside kick** by the kicking team: **Loss of five yards, or the receiving team takes possession of the ball at the spot of the illegal touch.**

**Item 2. Player Out of Bounds.** If a kicking team player goes out of bounds during the kick, either of his own volition or by being legally forced out of bounds, he may not touch or recover the ball beyond the receiving team's restraining line **on an onside kick or in the landing zone or end zone on all other free kicks**, unless it has first been touched by a receiving team player. If a kicking team player touches the ball before reestablishing himself legally inbounds, it is a free kick out of bounds.

**Penalty:** For illegal touching of a free kick by the kicking team: **Loss of five yards.**

**ARTICLE 6. PLAYER VOLUNTARILY OUT OF BOUNDS ON A FREE KICK.** Prior to the ball being touched by the receiving team or the end of the kick, it is a foul if a kicking team player voluntarily goes out of bounds (without being contacted by a receiving team player) to avoid a block.

**Penalty:** For voluntarily going out of bounds on a free kick without contact: **Loss of 5 yards.**

### **SECTION 3 ENFORCEMENT OF FOULS**

**ARTICLE 1. ENFORCEMENT FROM PREVIOUS SPOT.** If there is a foul during a free kick, enforcement is from the previous spot, and the free kick is made again. However, if the kicking team commits a foul prior to the end of the kick, and the receiving team retains possession throughout the down, it will have the option of enforcing the penalty at the previous spot and replaying the down or adding the penalty yardage to the dead ball spot. **The dead ball spot for free kicks that result in a touchback is the 20-yard line or 30-yard line (See Section 1, Article 5 above).**

#### **Exceptions:**

- (a) A foul for an illegal double team block, or an illegal wedge block, during the kick is enforced from the spot of the foul or the previous spot if it occurs in Team B's end zone;
- (b) For a free kick out of bounds **or not reaching the landing zone**, see Section 2, Article 4; or
- (c) For a free kick illegally touched, see Section 2, Article 5.

#### **Note:**

- (1) *In (a) above, if the foul is not part of a double foul and the opponent has possession at the end of the down, the foul may be enforced from the dead ball spot. See 14-2-4.*

## RULE 7 BALL IN PLAY, DEAD BALL, SCRIMMAGE

### SECTION 1 BALL IN PLAY

**ARTICLE 1. LIVE BALL.** After the ball has been declared ready for play, it becomes a live ball when it is legally snapped or legally kicked (a free kick or fair catch kick). The ball remains dead if it is snapped or kicked before it is made ready for play.

### SECTION 2 DEAD BALL

**ARTICLE 1. DEAD BALL DECLARED.** An official shall declare the ball dead and the down ended:

- (a) when a runner is contacted by an opponent and touches the ground with any part of his body other than his hands (including the wrist) or feet (including the ankle);
- (b) when a runner is held or otherwise restrained so that his forward progress ends;
- (c) when a quarterback immediately drops to his knee, or simulates dropping to his knee, behind the line of scrimmage;

**Note:** *If a quarterback does not immediately drop to a knee, and contact from a rushing defender is unavoidable, it is not a foul unless the defender commits some other act that would constitute unnecessary roughness.*

- (d) when a runner declares himself down by:
  - (1) falling to the ground or kneeling, and clearly making no immediate effort to advance; or
  - (2) sliding. When a runner slides feet or head first or simulates sliding, the ball is dead the instant he touches the ground with anything other than his hands or his feet, or begins to simulate touching the ground;

**Notes:**

- (1) *Defenders are required to treat a sliding runner as they would a runner who is down by contact.*
  - (2) *A defender must pull up when a runner begins a slide. This does not mean that all contact by a defender is illegal. If a defender has already committed himself, and the contact is unavoidable, it is not a foul unless the defender makes forcible contact into the head or neck area of the runner with the helmet, shoulder, or forearm, or commits some other act that is unnecessary roughness.*
  - (3) *A runner who desires to take advantage of this protection is responsible for starting his slide before contact by a defensive player is imminent; if he does not and waits until the last moment to begin his slide, he puts himself in jeopardy of being contacted.*
- (e) when a runner is out of bounds;
  - (f) when an opponent takes a ball that is in the possession of a runner who is on the ground;
  - (g) when a forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete (See 8-1-4);
  - (h) when any legal or illegal kick touches the receivers' goal posts or crossbar;
  - (i) when a loose ball comes to rest anywhere in the field, and no player attempts to recover it; the official covering the play should pause momentarily before signaling that the ball is dead. Any legal (or illegal) kick is awarded to the receivers, and any other ball is awarded to the team last in possession. When awarded to a team behind a goal line, the ball is placed on the one-yard line;
  - (j) when any legal or illegal kick is caught or recovered by the kickers, except a scrimmage kick that is kicked from behind the line and is recovered behind the line (See 9-3-2-Item 3 for exception);
  - (k) **when a kickoff or safety kick first touches the ground or a player in advance of the front yard line of the landing zone;**
  - (l) **when an onside kick goes untouched beyond the onside kick setup zone;**
  - (m) when a touchdown, touchback, safety, field goal, or Try has been made;
  - (n) when any receiver catches or recovers the ball after a fair catch signal (valid or invalid) has been made, provided the ball has not been touched by an opponent, before or after it strikes the ground;
  - (o) when an official sounds the whistle erroneously while the ball is still in play;
    - (1) If the ball is in player possession, the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where it has been declared dead or to replay the down.
    - (2) If the ball is a loose ball resulting from a fumble, backward pass, or illegal forward pass, the team last in possession may elect to put the ball in play at the spot where possession was lost or to replay the down.
    - (3) If the ball is a loose ball resulting from a legal forward pass, a free kick, a fair catch kick, or a scrimmage kick, the ball is returned to the previous spot, and the down is replayed.
    - (4) If there is a foul by either team during any of the above, and the team in possession at the time of the erroneous whistle elects not to replay the down, penalty enforcement is the same as for fouls during a run, forward pass, kick, fumble, and backward pass. If the team in possession elects to replay the down, all penalties will be disregarded, except for personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, which will be administered prior to the replaying of the down. If the down is replayed, the game clock will be reset to the time remaining when the snap occurred, and the clock will start on the snap.
  - (p) when a fumble is recovered or caught by a teammate of the fumbling player, and the fumble occurs on a play that is subject to the "two-minute", "Try", or "fourth-down" fumble provisions (See 8-7-5 and 8-7-6);
  - (q) when the ball is out of bounds;
  - (r) if a loose ball in play strikes a video board, guide wire, sky cam, or any other object, the ball will be dead immediately, and the down will be replayed at the previous spot. In the event the down is replayed, the game clock will be reset to the time remaining when the snap occurred, and the clock will start on the snap. All penalties will be disregarded, except for personal fouls or unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, which will be administered prior to the replaying of the down; or
  - (s) when a runner's helmet comes completely off.

**ARTICLE 2. BALL TOUCHES OFFICIAL.** The ball is not dead because it touches an official who is inbounds, or because of a signal by an official other than a whistle.

### SECTION 3 NEW SERIES OF DOWNS

**ARTICLE 1. NEW SERIES FOR TEAM A.** A new series of four scrimmage downs is awarded to Team A when the following conditions exist:

- (a) During a given series, the ball is declared dead in possession of Team A while at or beyond the line to gain;
- (b) Enforcement of a foul by Team B results in the placement of the ball at or beyond the line to gain, or if the enforcement of a foul awards an automatic first down to Team A;
- (c) If there is a change of possession during the down, and Team A has possession at the end of the down;
- (d) The kicking team recovers a scrimmage kick anywhere in the field of play after it first has been touched beyond the line of scrimmage by the receivers; or
- (e) The kicking team legally recovers a free kick.

**ARTICLE 2. NEW SERIES FOR TEAM B.** A new series of four scrimmage downs is awarded to Team B when the following conditions exist:

- (a) Team A fails to advance the ball to the line to gain during a series of downs;
- (b) There is a change of possession during the down, and Team B has possession at the end of the down, or has been awarded possession at the end of the down; or
- (c) When the ball is declared dead in possession of the receiving team after a free kick, scrimmage kick, or fair catch kick.

**ARTICLE 3. FORWARD PART OF BALL.** The forward part of the ball in its position when it is declared dead in the field of play shall be the determining point in measuring any distance gained or lost. The ball shall be rotated so that its long axis is parallel to the sidelines before measuring while maintaining the forward most point. When an airborne player of either team completes a catch or interception inbounds after an opponent has driven him backward, the ball is declared dead, and forward progress is awarded at the spot where initial contact by the opponent was made after the player established control of the ball while in the air.

### SECTION 4 ACTION AT OR BEFORE THE SNAP

**ARTICLE 1. BALL READY FOR PLAY.** After the neutral zone has been established (ball is made or declared ready for play), an offensive player may not make a false start, a defensive player may not encroach (initiate contact with a member of the offensive team) or commit a neutral zone infraction, and no player of either team may be offside when the ball is put in play.

**ARTICLE 2. FALSE START.** It is a false start if the ball has been placed ready for play, and, prior to the snap, an offensive player who has assumed a set position moves in such a way as to simulate the start of a play, or if an offensive player who is in motion makes a sudden movement toward the line of scrimmage. Any quick abrupt movement by a single offensive player, or by several offensive players in unison, which simulates the start of the snap, is a false start, and the official shall blow the whistle immediately, whether the snap is made or there is a reaction by the defense. For actions by a defensive player who attempts to cause an offensive player to commit a false start, see 4-6-5-d.

**Item 1. Interior Lineman.** It is a false start if an interior lineman (tackle to tackle) takes or simulates a three-point stance, and then changes his position or moves the hand that is on the ground.

An interior lineman who is in a two-point stance is permitted to reset in a three-point stance or change his position, provided that he comes to a complete stop prior to the snap. If he does not come to a complete stop prior to the snap, it is a false start.

**Item 2. Eligible Receiver.** If all 11 offensive players have been set for at least one full second, and an eligible receiver who is on the line of scrimmage moves forward, it is a false start, regardless of whether the action is quick and abrupt or slow and deliberate.

If an eligible receiver who is on the line of scrimmage moves backward or changes his stance (two point to three point or conversely) and does not come to a complete stop before the snap, it is a false start.

Any eligible backfield player who changes his stance does not have to come to a complete stop prior to the snap, as long as his actions are not abrupt (false start) or forward (illegal motion).

**Item 3. T-Formation Quarterback.** It is legal for a T-Formation Quarterback to go in motion, whether he has placed his hands under center, on his knees, or on the body of the center. However, it is a false start if the action is quick and abrupt. If the player fails to come to a complete stop for at least one full second prior to the ball being snapped, it is illegal motion.

**Item 4. Shotgun Formation.** A player who is in position to receive the snap in shotgun formation is permitted to shift his feet prior to the snap, but any quick and abrupt movement is a false start. This includes thrusting his hands forward when there is not a simultaneous snap.

**Item 5. Attempt to Draw Offside.** Any obvious attempt by the quarterback or other player in position to receive the snap to draw an opponent offside is a false start.

**Item 6. Shift Converts to False Start.** With the game clock running after the two-minute warning of either half, if all 11 offensive players are not set simultaneously for one full second prior to the snap, it is a false start. If all 11 players get set, and then two players shift without resetting prior to the snap, it is a live ball foul for an illegal shift. (7-4-7).

**Penalty: For a false start: Loss of five yards from the line of scrimmage. The penalty is enforced prior to the snap.**

**ARTICLE 3. ENCROACHMENT.** It is encroachment if a defensive player enters the neutral zone and contacts an offensive player or the ball prior to the snap, or if he interferes with the ball during the snap. Officials are to blow their whistles immediately.

**Penalty: For encroachment: Loss of five yards from the line of scrimmage. The penalty is enforced prior to the snap.**

**ARTICLE 4. NEUTRAL ZONE INFRACTION.** It is a neutral zone infraction when the following occur. Officials are to blow their whistles immediately:

- (a) a defender moves beyond the neutral zone prior to the snap and is parallel to or beyond an offensive lineman with an unimpeded path to the quarterback or kicker, even though no contact is made by a blocker;
- (b) a defender enters the neutral zone prior to the snap, causing the offensive player(s) in close proximity (including a T-Formation Quarterback) to react (move) immediately to protect himself (themselves) against impending contact. If there is no immediate reaction by the offensive player(s) in close proximity, and the defensive player returns to a legal position prior to the snap without contacting an opponent, there is no foul. A flexed or split receiver is considered to be in close proximity if he is lined up on the side of the ball on which the violation occurs; other offensive players are considered to be in close proximity if they are within two-and-one-half positions of the defender who enters the neutral zone. If the defender is directly over the center, a T-Formation Quarterback, the center, and the guards and tackles on both sides of the center are considered to be within close proximity; if the defender is in a gap, the two offensive players on either side of the gap are considered to be within close proximity (including a T-Formation Quarterback, if applicable); or
- (c) during the last two minutes of a half the ball is snapped before all members of the defensive team are on their side of the line of scrimmage. The offense must be legally set.

**Penalty: For a neutral zone infraction: Loss of five yards from line of scrimmage. Penalty is enforced prior to snap.**

**ARTICLE 5. OFFSIDE.** A player is offside when any part of his body is in or beyond the neutral zone or beyond a restraining line for an onside kick when the ball is put in play.

**Penalty: For offside: Loss of five yards.**

**ARTICLE 6. COMPLETE STOP.** All offensive players are required to come to a complete stop and be in a set position simultaneously for at least one full second prior to the snap. Failure to do so is an illegal shift (see 7-4-2-Item 6 for such an illegal shift foul after the two-minute warning of either half which converts to a false start).

**ARTICLE 7. SHIFTS.** The offensive team must present a legal formation before and after a shift. It is permitted to shift and have two or more players in motion multiple times before the snap. However, after the last shift, all players must come to a complete stop and be in a set position simultaneously for at least one full second.

If any eligible backfield player goes in motion (one at a time) after the last shift and comes to a complete stop, there is no requirement for a full second pause before a second player can legally go in motion.

However, if the first player has not come to a complete stop when the second player goes in motion, it is another shift and requires another simultaneous stop for at least one full second by all players.

It is also an illegal shift if a T-Formation Quarterback goes in motion and fails to come to a complete stop for at least one full second before a second player goes in motion.

**Penalty: For an illegal shift: Loss of five yards.**

**ARTICLE 8. ILLEGAL MOTION.** When the ball is snapped, one player who is lined up in the backfield may be in motion, provided that he is moving parallel to or away from the line of scrimmage. No player is permitted to be moving toward the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. All other players must be stationary in their positions.

If an eligible receiver who is on the line moves to another position on the line (not forward), he must come to a complete stop prior to the snap. If he does not come to a complete stop, it is illegal motion.

It is also illegal motion if a T-Formation Quarterback goes in motion and fails to come to a complete stop for at least one full second prior to the snap.

**Penalty: For a player illegally in motion at the snap: Loss of five yards.**

## **SECTION 5 POSITION OF PLAYERS AT THE SNAP**

**ARTICLE 1. OFFENSIVE TEAM.** The offensive team must comply with the following at the snap:

- (a) It must have seven or more players on the line, who may lock legs (3-18).
- (b) Eligible receivers must be on both ends of the line, and all of the players on the line between them must be ineligible receivers.
- (c) No player may be out of bounds.
- (d) No player may take a position that is neither clearly on, nor clearly off the line of scrimmage, unless he is directly behind the snapper. Only one player may be in such a position, and he must wear an eligible number, unless he has reported in accordance with Rule 5, Section 3, Article 1. Regardless of number or reporting status, this player must comply with all rules pertaining to motion (7-4-8) and eligibility (8-1-5, 8-1-6 and 8-3-1).
- (e) Players in eligible positions must wear an eligible number, unless they have reported in accordance with Rule 5, Section 3, Article 1.

**Penalty: For illegal formation by the offense: Loss of five yards.**

## **SECTION 6 PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY**

**ARTICLE 1. BALL IN PLAY.** The offensive team must put the ball in play with a snap at the spot where the previous down ended, unless the enforcement of a penalty moves the ball to another spot or the down ended outside the inbounds lines. If a fair catch kick is chosen after a fair catch, 10-2-4 and 11-4-3 apply.

**ARTICLE 2. SNAP AT INBOUNDS SPOT.** The ball is next put in play at the inbounds spot by the team entitled to possession (7-1-1 and 7-4-1) when:

- (a) a loose ball other than an incomplete forward pass is out of bounds between the goal lines;
- (b) a runner is out of bounds between the goal lines;
- (c) the ball is dead in a side zone (see 1-1-1);
- (d) the ball is placed in the side zone as the result of a penalty enforcement; or
- (e) a fair catch is made or awarded in a side zone.

**ARTICLE 3. RESTRICTIONS FOR SNAPPER.** The snap (3-31) may be made by any offensive player who is on the line of scrimmage but must conform to the following provisions:

- (a) The snap must start with the ball on the ground, with its long axis at right angles to the line.
- (b) It is not necessary that the snap be between the snapper's legs, but it must be one quick and continuous motion of the hand or hands of the snapper. The ball must leave or be taken from his hands during this motion.
- (c) The snapper may not snap the ball after it is ready for play until all of the officials have had a reasonable time to assume their normal positions. If this occurs, the ball remains dead, and no penalty is assessed unless it is a repeated act after a warning (delay of game).

**Penalty: For illegally snapping the ball: Loss of five yards from the line of scrimmage.**

**ARTICLE 4. LEGAL SNAP.** A snap is a backward pass. The snap must be received by a player who is not on the line of scrimmage at the snap, unless the ball first strikes the ground. If the ball first strikes the ground, or is muffed by an eligible backfield receiver, or a T-Formation Quarterback, it can be recovered and advanced by any player.

**Penalty: For snapping the ball to a player who is ineligible to receive the snap: Loss of five yards from the line of scrimmage. The whistle shall be blown immediately.**

## RULE 8 FORWARD PASS, BACKWARD PASS, FUMBLE

### SECTION 1 FORWARD PASS

**ARTICLE 1. DEFINITION.** It is a forward pass if:

- (a) the ball initially moves forward (to a point nearer the opponent's goal line) after leaving the passer's hand(s);
- (b) the ball first strikes the ground, a player, an official, or anything else at a point that is nearer the opponent's goal line than the point at which the ball leaves the passer's hand(s); or
- (c) a ball is intentionally fumbled and goes forward.

**Item 1. Forward Movement of Hand.** When a player is in control of the ball and is attempting to pass it forward, any intentional forward movement of his hand starts a forward pass.

- (a) If contact by an opponent materially affects a passer after the passer begins his throwing motion, it is a forward pass if he passes the ball, regardless of where the ball strikes the ground, a player, an official, or anything else. When this occurs, intentional grounding rules do not apply.
- (b) When a passer intends to throw a forward pass and is contacted by an opponent before beginning his throwing motion, the direction of the pass is the responsibility of the passer if he passes the ball, and intentional grounding rules apply.
- (c) If, after an intentional forward movement of his hand, the passer loses possession of the ball during an attempt to bring it back toward his body, it is a fumble.
- (d) If the passer loses possession of the ball while attempting to re-cock his arm, it is a fumble.

**ARTICLE 2. LEGAL FORWARD PASS.** The offensive team may make one forward pass from behind the line during each down. If the ball, whether in player possession or loose, crosses the line of scrimmage, a forward pass is not permissible, regardless of whether the ball returns behind the line of scrimmage before the pass is thrown.

**Item 1. Illegal Passes.** Any other forward pass by either team is illegal and is a foul by the passing team, including:

- (a) a forward pass thrown when the passer's entire body and the ball are beyond the line of scrimmage when the ball is released, whether the passer is airborne or touching the ground.
- (b) A second forward pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.
- (c) A forward pass thrown after the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage and has returned behind it.
- (d) A forward pass thrown after there has been a change of possession.

**Item 2. Intercepted Illegal Pass.** If an illegal pass is caught or intercepted, the ball may be advanced, and the penalty declined.

**Penalties:**

- (a) **For a forward pass from beyond the line: Loss of down and five yards from the spot where the ball is released.**
- (b) **For a second forward pass from behind the line, or for a forward pass that was thrown after the ball returned behind the line: Loss of down and five yards from the previous spot.**
- (c) **For a forward pass that is thrown after a change of possession: Loss of five yards from where the ball is released.**

**Notes:**

- (1) *Eligibility, pass interference, and intentional grounding rules apply when a forward pass is thrown from behind the line, regardless of whether the pass is an illegal forward pass. Eligibility, pass interference, and intentional grounding rules do not apply if a forward pass is thrown (a) from beyond the line, (b) on a free kick play, (c) on a fair catch kick play, or (d) after a change of possession.*
- (2) *Roughing the passer rules apply on all passes (legal or illegal) thrown from behind the line of scrimmage (12-2-11). If a pass is thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage, unnecessary roughness may apply for action against the passer.*

**ARTICLE 3. COMPLETED OR INTERCEPTED PASS.** A player who makes a catch may advance the ball. A forward pass is complete (by the offense) or intercepted (by the defense) in the field of play, at the sideline, or in the end zone if a player, who is inbounds:

- (a) secures control of the ball in his hands or arms prior to the ball touching the ground; and
- (b) touches the ground inbounds with both feet or with any part of his body other than his hands; and
- (c) after (a) and (b) have been fulfilled, performs any act common to the game (e.g., tuck the ball away, extend it forward, take an additional step, turn upfield, or avoid or ward off an opponent), or he maintains control of the ball long enough to do so.

**Notes:**

- (1) *Movement of the ball does not automatically result in loss of control.*
- (2) *If a player, who satisfied (a) and (b), but has not satisfied (c), contacts the ground and loses control of the ball, it is an incomplete pass if the ball hits the ground before he regains control, or if he regains control out of bounds.*
- (3) *A receiver is considered a player in a defenseless posture (See Rule 12, Section 2, Article 9) throughout the entire process of the catch and until the player is capable of avoiding or warding off the impending contact of an opponent.*
- (4) *If a pass is caught simultaneously by two eligible opponents, and both players retain it, the ball belongs to the passers. It is not a simultaneous catch if a player gains control first and an opponent subsequently gains joint control. If the ball is muffed after simultaneous touching by two such players, all the players of the passing team become eligible to catch the loose ball.*
- (5) *If a player, who is in possession of the ball, is held up and carried out of bounds by an opponent before both feet or any part of his body other than his hands touches the ground inbounds, it is a completed or intercepted pass. It is not necessary for the player to maintain control of the ball when he lands out of bounds.*
- (6) *If any part of the foot hits out of bounds during the normal continuous motion of taking a step (heel-toe or toe-heel) then the foot is out of bounds. A player is inbounds if he drags his foot, or if there is a delay between the heel-toe or toe-heel touching the ground.*



**ARTICLE 4. INCOMPLETE PASS.** An incomplete pass is a loss of down, and the ball returns to the previous spot. Any forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete and the ball is dead immediately if:

- (a) The process of the catch in 8-1-3 is not completed;
- (b) The ball goes out of bounds; or
- (c) A player is the first to touch a pass after having been out of bounds, but prior to reestablishing himself inbounds with both feet or any body part other than his hands. There is not a foul for illegal touching.

**ARTICLE 5. ELIGIBLE RECEIVERS.** The following players are eligible to catch a forward pass that is thrown from behind the line of scrimmage:

- (a) Defensive players;
- (b) Offensive players who are on either end of the line, provided they either have the numbers of eligible players (0–49 and 80–89) or have legally reported to play a position on the end of the line. See 5-1-2;
- (c) Offensive players who are legally at least one yard behind the line at the snap, provided they either have the numbers of eligible players (0–49 and 80–89) or have legally reported to play a position in the backfield;
- (d) All offensive players after the ball has been touched by any defensive player or any eligible offensive player; or
- (e) An eligible receiver who is forced out of bounds by an opponent's foul, provided he attempts to return inbounds immediately and reestablishes inbounds with both feet or with any body part other than his hands, without prior touching.

**ARTICLE 6. INELIGIBLE RECEIVERS.** All offensive players other than those identified in Article 5 above are ineligible to catch a legal or illegal forward pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage, including:

- (a) Players who are not on either end of their line or at least one yard behind it when the ball is snapped;
- (b) Players who fail to notify the Referee of being eligible as required by Article 5;
- (c) An eligible receiver who has been out of bounds prior to or during a pass, either by his own volition or by being legally forced out, even if he has reestablished himself inbounds with both feet or with any part of his body other than his hands; or
- (d) A player who takes his stance as a T-Formation Quarterback unless, before the ball is snapped, he legally moves to a position at least one yard behind the line of scrimmage or on the end of the line and is stationary in that position for at least one second before the snap.

**ARTICLE 7. LEGAL TOUCHING.** A forward pass (legal or illegal) thrown from behind the line may be touched by any eligible player. A pass in flight may be tipped, batted, or deflected in any direction by any eligible player at any time, including such a pass in the end zone.

**ARTICLE 8. ILLEGAL TOUCHING OF A FORWARD PASS.** It is a foul for illegal touching if a forward pass (legal or illegal) thrown from behind the line of scrimmage:

- (a) is first touched intentionally or is caught by an originally ineligible offensive player. If such a pass is caught, it is a live ball; or

**Penalty: For illegal touching of a forward pass: Loss of five yards at the previous spot.**

- (b) first touches or is caught by an eligible offensive receiver who has gone out of bounds, either of his own volition or by being legally forced out of bounds and has reestablished himself inbounds. If such a pass is caught, it is a live ball.

**Penalty: For illegal touching of a forward pass after being out of bounds: Loss of down at the previous spot.**

## SECTION 2 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING

**ARTICLE 1. DEFINITION.** It is a foul for intentional grounding if a passer, facing an imminent loss of yardage because of pressure from the defense, throws a forward pass without a realistic chance of completion. A realistic chance of completion is defined as a pass that is thrown in the direction of and lands in the vicinity of an originally eligible offensive receiver.

**Item 1. Passer or Ball Outside Pocket Area.** Intentional grounding will not be called when a passer, who is outside, or has been outside, the pocket area, throws a forward pass that lands at or beyond the line of scrimmage extended (including when the ball lands out of bounds over the sideline or endline), even if no offensive player(s) have a realistic chance to catch the ball. If a loose ball leaves the pocket area, this area no longer exists; if the ball is recovered, all intentional grounding rules apply as if the passer is outside pocket area. **A passer is out of the pocket area if any part of his body or the ball is outside the pocket area.**

**Item 2. Physical Contact.** Intentional grounding should not be called if:

- (a) the passer initiates his passing motion toward an eligible receiver and then is significantly affected by physical contact from a defensive player that causes the pass to land in an area that is not in the direction and vicinity of an eligible receiver; or
- (b) the passer is out of the pocket area, and his passing motion is significantly affected by physical contact from a defensive player that causes the ball to land short of the line of scrimmage.

**Item 3. Stopping Clock.** A T-Formation Quarterback is permitted to stop the game clock legally to conserve time if, immediately upon receiving the snap, he begins a continuous throwing motion and throws the ball directly into the ground.

**Item 4. Delayed Spike.** A passer, after delaying his passing action for strategic purposes, is prohibited from throwing the ball to the ground in front of him, even if he is under no pressure from defensive rusher(s).

**Penalty: For intentional grounding:**

- (a) **loss of down and 10 yards from the previous spot; or**
- (b) **loss of down at the spot of the pass if the spot is more than 10 yards from the previous spot or more than half the distance to the goal line; or**
- (c) **a safety if the passer's entire body and the ball are in his end zone when the ball is thrown. See 4-7 for actions that conserve time inside two minutes of either half.**

### SECTION 3 INELIGIBLE PLAYER DOWNFIELD

**ARTICLE 1. LEGAL AND ILLEGAL ACTS.** On a scrimmage play during which a legal forward pass is thrown, it is a foul if the entire body of an ineligible offensive player, including a T-Formation Quarterback, is more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage before the pass has been thrown.

**Item 1. Legally Downfield.** An ineligible player is not illegally downfield if, after initiating contact with an opponent within one yard of the line of scrimmage during his initial charge:

- (a) he moves more than one yard beyond the line while legally blocking or being blocked by an opponent;
- (b) after breaking legal contact with an opponent more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage, he remains stationary, **moves laterally, or moves toward his own goal line** until a forward pass is thrown; or
- (c) after losing legal contact with an opponent more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage, he is forced behind the line of scrimmage by an opponent, at which time he is again subject to normal blocking restrictions for an ineligible offensive player.

**Note:** *If an ineligible offensive player moves beyond the line while legally blocking or being blocked by an opponent, an eligible offensive player may catch a pass between them and the line of scrimmage.*

**Item 2. Illegally Downfield.** An ineligible offensive player is illegally downfield if:

- (a) his entire body is more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage without contacting an opponent;
- (b) after losing contact with an opponent within one yard of the line of scrimmage, he advances so his entire body is more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage; or
- (c) after losing contact with an opponent with his entire body more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage, he continues to move toward his opponent's goal line.

**Penalty: For ineligible offensive player downfield: Loss of five yards from the previous spot.**

**ARTICLE 2. AFTER PASS IS THROWN.** After the ball leaves the passer's hand, ineligible pass receivers can advance more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage, or beyond the position reached by their initial charge, provided that they do not block or contact a defensive player, who is more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage, until the ball is touched by a player of either team. Such prior blocking and/or contact is pass interference if it occurs in the vicinity of where the ball is thrown. See 8-3-1-Note above for exception when blocker maintains continuous contact.

### SECTION 4 LEGAL AND ILLEGAL CONTACT WITH ELIGIBLE RECEIVERS

**ARTICLE 1. LEGAL CONTACT WITHIN FIVE YARDS.** Within the area five yards beyond the line of scrimmage, a defensive player may chuck an eligible receiver in front of him. The defender is allowed to maintain continuous and unbroken contact within the five-yard zone, so long as the receiver has not moved beyond a point that is even with the defender.

**ARTICLE 2. ILLEGAL CONTACT WITHIN FIVE YARDS.** Within the five-yard zone, if the player who receives the snap remains in the pocket area with the ball, a defender may not make initial contact in the back of a receiver, nor may he maintain contact after the receiver has moved beyond a point that is even with the defender. If a defender contacts a receiver within the five-yard zone, loses contact, and then contacts him again within the five-yard zone, it is a foul for illegal contact.

**ARTICLE 3. ILLEGAL CONTACT BEYOND FIVE-YARD ZONE.** Beyond the five-yard zone, if the player who receives the snap remains in the pocket area with the ball, a defender cannot initiate contact with a receiver who is attempting to evade him. A defender may use his hands or arms only to defend or protect himself against impending contact caused by a receiver. If a defender contacts a receiver within the five-yard zone and maintains contact with him, he must release the receiver as they exit the five-yard zone.

**ARTICLE 4. INCIDENTAL CONTACT BEYOND FIVE-YARD ZONE.** Beyond the five-yard zone, incidental contact may exist between receiver and defender.

**Penalty: For illegal contact by the defense: Loss of five yards and automatic first down.**

**ARTICLE 5. ILLEGAL CUT BLOCK.** It is an illegal cut block if:

- (a) an eligible receiver who takes a position more than two yards outside of his own tackle (flexed receiver) is blocked below the waist at, behind, or beyond the line of scrimmage; or
- (b) an eligible receiver who is lined up within two yards of the tackle, whether on or behind the line, is blocked below the waist after he goes beyond the line of scrimmage (such players may be blocked below the waist at or behind the line of scrimmage).

**Penalty: For illegal cut block: Loss of 15 yards and automatic first down.**

**ARTICLE 6. DEFENSIVE HOLDING.** It is defensive holding if a player grasps an eligible offensive player (or his jersey) with his hands, or extends an arm or arms to cut off or encircle him. See 12-1-6. Any offensive player who pretends to possess the ball, and/or one to whom a teammate pretends to give the ball, may be tackled until he leaves the pocket area.

**Penalty: For holding by the defense: Loss of five yards and automatic first down.**

**ARTICLE 7. END OF RESTRICTIONS.** If the quarterback or the receiver of the snap demonstrates no further intention to pass the ball (i.e., hands off or pitches the ball to another player, throws a forward or backward pass, loses possession of the ball by a muff that touches the ground or a fumble, or if he is tackled) the restrictions on the defensive team prohibiting illegal contact, or an illegal cut block, against an eligible receiver will end, and a defensive player is permitted to use his hands, arms, or body to push, pull, or ward off an offensive receiver, pursuant to Rule 12, Section 1, Article 5. If the quarterback leaves the pocket area with the ball in his possession, the restrictions on illegal contact and an illegal cut block both end, but the restriction on defensive holding remains in effect.

If a team presents a punt formation (3-17-7), defensive acts that normally constitute illegal contact (chuck beyond five yards, etc.) are permitted, provided that the acts do not constitute defensive holding.



**SECTION 5 PASS INTERFERENCE**

**ARTICLE 1. DEFINITION.** It is pass interference by either team when any act by a player more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage significantly hinders an eligible player's opportunity to catch the ball. Pass interference can only occur when a forward pass is thrown from behind the line of scrimmage, regardless of whether the pass is legal or illegal, or whether it crosses the line. When the ball is in the air, eligible offensive and defensive receivers have the same right to the path of the ball and are subject to the same restrictions.

Acts that do not occur more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage are not pass interference but could be offensive or defensive holding (see 12-1-3 and 12-1-6).

Defensive pass interference rules apply from the time the ball is thrown until the ball is touched. See Article 2 for prohibited acts while the ball is in the air.

Offensive pass interference rules apply from the time the ball is snapped until the ball is touched. See Article 2 for prohibited acts while the ball is in the air and Article 4 for prohibited acts prior to the pass.

**ARTICLE 2. PROHIBITED ACTS BY BOTH TEAMS WHILE THE BALL IS IN THE AIR.** Acts that are pass interference include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Contact by a player who is not playing the ball that restricts the opponent's opportunity to make the catch;
- (b) Playing through the back of an opponent in an attempt to make a play on the ball;
- (c) Grabbing an opponent's arm(s) in such a manner that restricts his opportunity to catch a pass;
- (d) Extending an arm across the body of an opponent, thus restricting his ability to catch a pass, and regardless of whether the player committing such act is playing the ball;
- (e) Cutting off the path of an opponent by making contact with him, without playing the ball;
- (f) Hooking an opponent in an attempt to get to the ball in such a manner that it causes the opponent's body to turn prior to the ball arriving; or
- (g) Initiating contact with an opponent by shoving or pushing off, thus creating separation.

**ARTICLE 3. PERMISSIBLE ACTS BY BOTH TEAMS WHILE THE BALL IS IN THE AIR.** Acts that are permissible by a player include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Incidental contact by an opponent's hands, arms, or body when both players are competing for the ball, or neither player is looking for the ball. If there is any question whether contact is incidental, the ruling shall be no interference;
- (b) Inadvertent tangling of feet when both players are playing the ball or neither player is playing the ball;
- (c) Contact that would normally be considered pass interference, but the pass is clearly uncatchable by the involved players, except as specified in 8-3-2 and 8-5-4 pertaining to blocking downfield by the offense;
- (d) Laying a hand on an opponent that does not restrict him in an attempt to make a play on the ball;
- (e) Contact by a player who has gained position on an opponent in an attempt to catch the ball; or
- (f) When a team presents a punt formation (3-17-7) and before the ball is kicked, acts that normally constitute pass interference against the end man on the line of scrimmage or against an eligible receiver behind the line of scrimmage, who is aligned or in motion more than one yard outside the end man on the line. Defensive holding and offensive pass interference rules still apply.

**ARTICLE 4. OTHER PROHIBITED ACTS BY THE OFFENSE.** Acts that are pass interference include:

- (a) Blocking more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage by an offensive player prior to a pass being thrown. See 8-3-1-Note for exception for an ineligible offensive player; or
- (b) Blocking a defender beyond the line while the pass is in the air if the block occurs in the vicinity of the player to whom the pass is thrown. See 8-3-1-Note for exception for ineligible players.

**Penalty: For pass interference by the defense: First down for the offensive team at the spot of the foul. If the interference is also a personal foul (12-2), the 15-yard penalty for such a foul is also enforced, either from the spot of the foul (for interference), or from the end of the run if the foul for pass interference is declined. If the interference is behind the defensive goal line, it is first down for the offensive team on the defense's one-yard line, or, if the previous spot was inside the two-yard line, halfway between the previous spot and the goal line.**

**Penalty: For pass interference by the offense: Loss of 10 yards from the previous spot.**

**SECTION 6 ENFORCEMENT SPOT**

**ARTICLE 1. ENFORCEMENT SPOT.** If there is a foul by either team from the time of the snap until a forward pass thrown from behind the line ends, the penalty is enforced from the previous spot. A pass play ends and a running play begins at the instant that a pass is caught.

**Exceptions:**

- (a) Intentional grounding is a loss of down at the spot of the foul, or a loss of down and a 10-yard penalty from the previous spot, whichever is less beneficial for the offense. If the foul occurs less than 10 yards behind the line of scrimmage, but more than half the distance to the goal line, the ball shall be placed at the spot of the pass. (If the pass is thrown from the end zone, it is a safety).
- (b) Pass interference by the defense is enforced from the spot of the foul. If it occurs in the fouling team's end zone, the ball will be placed at the one-yard line, or half the distance to the goal line from the previous spot, whichever is more beneficial to the offense.

- (c) It is a safety when the offensive team commits a foul behind its own goal line if the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot.
- (d) If there is a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by the defense prior to completion of a forward pass thrown from behind the line, enforcement is from the previous spot or the dead ball spot, whichever is more beneficial to the offense. If the play results in a score for the offense, enforcement is on the Try. If the passing team is fouled and subsequently loses possession after a completion, the passing team retains possession of the ball, and enforcement is from the previous spot.
- (e) If there is a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by the offense prior to the offense losing possession during a pass play or a subsequent running play, enforcement is from the dead ball spot. However, if the defense subsequently loses possession, the penalty is enforced from the spot of the defense's catch or recovery, and the defense retains possession. This also applies to a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by the offense prior to a forward pass thrown from behind the line when the offense fails to make the line to gain.

**Notes:**

- (1) *The penalty for a forward pass from behind the line after the ball has been beyond the line, or for a second forward pass from behind the line, is enforced from the previous spot, unless the spot of the pass is behind the passer's goal line, in which case it is a safety if the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot, or the 30-yard line or 20-yard line (as applicable) if the impetus was from a free kick.*
- (2) *If a forward pass is thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage, or when there is no line of scrimmage, it is a foul during a running play.*

## SECTION 7 BACKWARD PASS AND FUMBLE

**ARTICLE 1. BACKWARD PASS.** A runner may throw a backward pass at any time (3-21-5). Players of either team may advance after catching a backward pass, or recovering a backward pass after it touches the ground. Any snap from center is a backward pass.

**ARTICLE 2. BACKWARD PASS OUT OF BOUNDS.** If a backward pass goes out of bounds between the goal lines, the ball is dead (7-6-2-a), and it is next put in play at the inbounds spot. Rule 11 governs if a backward pass is declared dead behind the goal line. *During a play that starts after the two-minute warning of either half, if a backward pass goes out of bounds before a change of possession, it is an action that conserves time (4-7-1).*

**Penalty: For a backward pass out of bounds before a change of possession during a play that starts after the two-minute warning. Loss of down and 5 yards.**

**ARTICLE 3. FUMBLE.** A fumble is any act, other than a pass or kick, which results in a loss of player possession.

**Exception:** If a runner intentionally fumbles forward, it is a forward pass (3-2-5-Note).

**Item 1. Recovery and Advance.** Any player of either team may recover or catch a fumble and advance, either before or after the ball strikes the ground, unless the fumble occurs on fourth down (See 8-7-5 below), after the two-minute warning, *or during a Try* (See 8-6-6 below).

**Item 2. Legal Recovery.** For a legal recovery of a fumble, see 3-2-7.

**Item 3. Out of Bounds in the Field of Play.** When a fumble goes out of bounds between the goal lines, the following shall apply:

- (a) If a fumble goes backward and out of bounds, the ball is next put in play at the inbounds spot by the team that was last in possession;
- (b) If a fumble goes forward and out of bounds, the ball is next put in play at the spot of the fumble by the team that was last in possession;
- (c) If a ball is fumbled in a team's own end zone and goes forward into the field of play and out of bounds, it will result in a safety, if that team provided the impetus that put the ball into the end zone (See 11-5-1 for exception for momentum). If the impetus was provided by the opponent, the play will result in a touchback; or
- (d) Notwithstanding any of the above, when there has not been a change of possession during the down, and the spot of the ball is not at or beyond the line to gain after fourth down, the ball is awarded to Team B at the spot that the ball is declared dead.

**Item 4. Out of Bounds in End Zone.** When a fumble goes out of bounds in the end zone, the following shall apply:

- (a) If a ball is fumbled in the field of play, and goes forward into the opponent's end zone and over the end line or sideline, a touchback is awarded to the defensive team; or
- (b) If a ball is fumbled in a team's own end zone or in the field of play and goes out of bounds in the end zone, it is a safety, if that team provided the impetus that sent the ball into the end zone (See 11-5-1 for exception for momentum). If the impetus was provided by the opponent, it is a touchback.

**ARTICLE 4. HANDING BALL FORWARD.** No player may hand the ball forward except to an eligible receiver who is behind the line of scrimmage.

- (a) Loss of player possession by unsuccessful execution of attempted handing is a fumble charged to the player that last had possession.
- (b) A muffed handoff (legal or illegal) is a fumble, and the ball remains alive.

**Penalties:**

- (a) **For handing ball forward beyond the line of scrimmage: Loss of down and five yards from spot of the foul.**
- (b) **For handing ball forward to an ineligible receiver behind the line of scrimmage: Loss of down and five yards from the previous spot.**
- (c) **For handing ball forward after a change of possession: Loss of five yards from the spot of the foul.**

**ARTICLE 5. FOURTH DOWN FUMBLE.** If a fourth down fumble occurs during a play from scrimmage:

- (a) The ball may be advanced by any member of the defensive team.
- (b) The player who fumbled is the only Team A player permitted to recover and advance the ball prior to a change of possession.
- (c) If, prior to a change of a possession, the recovery or catch is by a teammate of the player who fumbled, the ball is dead, and the spot of the next snap is the spot of the fumble, or the spot of the recovery if the spot of the recovery is behind the spot of the fumble.

**ARTICLE 6. FUMBLE AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING OR DURING A TRY.** If a fumble by either team occurs after the two-minute warning or during a Try:

- (a) The ball may be advanced by any opponent.
- (b) The player who fumbled is the only player of his team who is permitted to recover and advance the ball.
- (c) If the recovery or catch is by a teammate of the player who fumbled, the ball is dead, and the spot of the next snap is the spot of the fumble, or the spot of the recovery if the spot of the recovery is behind the spot of the fumble.

**ARTICLE 7. ENFORCEMENT SPOT DURING A BACKWARD PASS OR FUMBLE.** If there is a foul by either team during a backward pass or fumble, the basic spot is the spot of the backward pass or fumble. The three-and-one method of enforcement is used (see Rule 14, Section 3, Article 6).

- (a) When the spot of the backward pass or fumble is beyond the line of scrimmage, or when there is not a line of scrimmage, and there is a foul during the backward pass or fumble, the basic spot is the spot of the backward pass or the spot of the fumble. The three-and-one method of enforcement is used. See 14-3-6.
- (b) When the spot of a backward pass or fumble is behind the line of scrimmage, all fouls committed by either team, including a foul by Team B in Team A's end zone, are enforced from the previous spot, except a foul by the offense in its end zone is a safety if the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot.
- (c) If there is a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by the offense during a fumble or backward pass that is recovered by the defense, enforcement is from the dead ball spot. If the recovering team subsequently loses possession, the penalty is enforced from the spot of its recovery, and it retains possession. This also applies to a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by the offense during a fumble or backward pass that is recovered by the offense, and the offense fails to make the line to gain.

**Notes:**

- (1) *If Team B gains possession in its end zone, and the impetus was by Team A, if Team B fumbles or throws a backward pass in the end zone, and fouls while the ball is loose, the spot of the fumble or the backward pass is considered to be the B20-yard line, or the B30-yard line or B20-yard line (as applicable) if the impetus was from a free kick.*
- (2) *If a Team B player's original momentum carries him into his end zone, where he fumbles the ball, the spot of the fumble is considered to be the spot at which the player established possession. See 11-5-1-Exc. 2.*

## RULE 9 SCRIMMAGE KICK

### SECTION 1 KICK FROM SCRIMMAGE

**ARTICLE 1. KICK ON OR BEHIND LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.** Team A may attempt a punt, drop kick, or place kick from on or behind the line of scrimmage. A kick is beyond the line of scrimmage if the kicker's entire body and the ball are beyond the line of scrimmage when the ball is kicked.

**Penalty: For a punt, drop kick, or place kick that is kicked beyond the line of scrimmage or not from scrimmage: Loss of down and five yards from the spot of the kick. For a second kick from behind the line after the ball has crossed the line: Loss of down and five yards from the previous spot.**

**Notes:**

- (1) *This is not considered illegally kicking the ball.*
- (2) *A second kick from behind the line of scrimmage is legal provided the ball has not crossed the line and returned behind the line.*
- (3) *Scrimmage kick rules apply to punts, drop kicks, and place kicks anywhere on the field.*

**ARTICLE 2. KICKING TEAM PLAYERS ON LINE DURING KICK.** During a kick from scrimmage, only the end men (eligible receivers) on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap, or an eligible receiver who is aligned or in motion behind the line and is more than one yard outside the end man, are permitted to advance more than one yard beyond the line before the ball is kicked.

**Penalty: For ineligible player downfield before the ball is kicked: Loss of five yards.**

**ARTICLE 3. DEFENSIVE TEAM FORMATION.**

**Item 1. Punt Formation.** When Team A presents a punt formation:

- (1) A Team B player, who is within one yard of the line of scrimmage, must have his entire body outside the snapper's shoulder pads at the snap.

**Penalty: For illegal formation by the defense: Loss of five yards.**

- (2) Team B players cannot push teammates into the offensive formation.

**Penalty: For pushing teammates into offensive formation: Loss of 15 yards.**

*Note: The restriction in (1) above does not apply if a team does not present a standard punt formation (an equal number of players on either side of the snapper in a tight formation, and one player split out wide to either side), or if, after the offensive team has assumed a set position, there is a shift, or a player goes in motion.*

**Item 2: Field Goal or Try Kick Formation.** When Team A presents a field goal or Try Kick formation:

- (1) A Team B player, who is within one yard of the line of scrimmage, must have his entire body outside the snapper's shoulder pads at the snap.
- (2) No more than six Team B players may be on the line of scrimmage on either side of the snapper at the snap.

**Penalty: For illegal formation by the defense: Loss of five yards.**

- (3) Team B players cannot push teammates into the offensive formation.

**Penalty: For pushing teammates into offensive formation: Loss of 15 yards.**

*Note: The restrictions in (1) and (2) above do not apply if a team does not present a standard field goal or Try Kick formation (an equal number of players on either side of the snapper in a tight formation), or if, after the offensive team has assumed a set position, there is a shift, or a player goes in motion.*

**ARTICLE 4. BLOCKING DURING KICK.** The following blocking rules apply during a scrimmage kick down:

- (a) All players on the receiving team are prohibited from blocking below the waist during a down in which there is a scrimmage kick.
- (b) A player on the receiving team may not go out of bounds and block a member of the kicking team who is out of bounds (12-2-8-c).
- (c) Prior to the ball being kicked, the kicking team is subject to the blocking restrictions applicable to the offense, and the receiving team is subject to the blocking restrictions applicable to the defense, except that a kicking team player may use his hands to ward off, push, or pull aside a receiver who is legally or illegally attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield.
- (d) After the ball is kicked and goes beyond the line of scrimmage, and until the kick ends (either team secures possession of the ball, or the ball is dead by rule), the kicking team is subject to the blocking restrictions of the defense, and the receiving team is subject to the blocking restrictions of the offense. (For the exception prohibiting a block in the back by the kicking team while the ball is in flight, see 12-1-3-b.) After the kick ends, both teams are subject to the normal restrictions applicable to offense and defense.

**Exception:** If the ball does not go beyond the line of scrimmage, or goes beyond the line of scrimmage and returns behind the line untouched by the receiving team beyond the line, the blocking restrictions do not change, and the kicking team continues to be subject to the blocking restrictions of the offense and the receiving team to the blocking restrictions of the defense.

- (e) **During a scrimmage kick play that** goes beyond the line of scrimmage, the penalty yardage for holding and illegal use of hands fouls by either team shall be 10 yards **unless the foul is committed in an attempt to block the kick (See 14-4-8).**

**ARTICLE 5. KICKING TEAM PLAYER VOLUNTARILY OUT OF BOUNDS.** During a scrimmage kick that crosses the line of scrimmage, and prior to the end of the kick, it is a foul if a kicking team player goes out of bounds voluntarily (without being contacted by a receiving team player) to avoid a block by a receiving team player.

**Penalty: For a kicking team player voluntarily going out of bounds on a scrimmage kick: Loss of five yards.**

If a member of the kicking team is forced out of bounds, or goes out of bounds voluntarily, and does not attempt to return inbounds in a reasonable amount of time, it is a foul for unsportsmanlike conduct (12-3-1-u).

## SECTION 2 TOUCHING A SCRIMMAGE KICK

**ARTICLE 1. TOUCHING BEHIND THE LINE.** Any touching of the ball behind the line of scrimmage by a kicking team player is legal, even if the ball has crossed the line and returns behind the line.

**ARTICLE 2. FIRST TOUCHING BEYOND THE LINE.** "First touching" is when a player of the kicking team touches a scrimmage kick in the field of play that is beyond the line of scrimmage before it has been touched by a player of the receiving team beyond the line. If the ball is first touched by a player of the kicking team, it remains in play. First touching is a violation, and the receivers shall have the option of taking possession of the ball at the spot of first touching, provided no live ball penalty is accepted on the play, or at the spot where the ball is dead. First touching does not offset a foul by the receivers; if there is a live ball foul by the receivers that is enforced, either before or after the first touching violation, or any changes of possession, the violation is disregarded, and the penalty is enforced as customary.

### Notes:

- (1) *There may be multiple "first touch" spots if the kicking team touches the ball multiple times before it is touched by a player of the receiving team.*
- (2) *A Team B player is deemed not to have touched a kick if such touching occurs in the immediate vicinity of the line of scrimmage in an attempt to block the kick.*
- (3) *If a player of the kicking team touches the goal line with any part of his body while touching the ball, the ball is dead, and the result of the play is a touchback.*
- (4) *The spot of first touching is normally the yard line at which the ball is when touched. If the first touching occurs while the ball is in the air above or beyond the goal line, and prior to the ball touching the goal line or the ground beyond the goal line, the spot of first touching is deemed to be the spot from which the touching player left the field of play, but in no event inside the receiving team's one-yard line.*

**ARTICLE 3. KICKING TEAM PLAYER OUT OF BOUNDS.** A player of the kicking team, who has gone out of bounds during the kick, either of his own volition or by being legally forced out of bounds, may not touch or recover a scrimmage kick beyond the line of scrimmage until it has been touched by a kicking team player who has not been out of bounds, or until it has been touched by a player of the receiving team beyond the line. If he touches or recovers the ball before he has reestablished himself inbounds, the ball is out of bounds at the spot of the touch, and there is no foul.

**Penalty: For illegal touching of a scrimmage kick: Loss of five yards. If the illegal touching is inside the receiver's five-yard line, in addition to the other specified options, the receiving team may elect to take a touchback.**

**ARTICLE 4. BLOCKED INTO KICK.** There is no distinction between a player touching a ball or being touched by it, but a player is not considered to have touched the ball if he is blocked into it by an opponent, provided he is in a passive position and not blocking. A player who is engaged with and blocking his opponent when he contacts the ball is deemed to have touched the ball.

**ARTICLE 5. BALL BATTED OR ILLEGALLY KICKED INTO OPPONENT.** A receiving team player is deemed to have not touched the ball if it is batted or illegally kicked into him by an opponent. Such touching by the receiving team is disregarded, though the bat or kick could create a first touching violation or a foul for an illegal bat or illegal kick.

## SECTION 3 CATCH OR RECOVERY OF A SCRIMMAGE KICK

**ARTICLE 1. KICKERS CATCH OR RECOVER BEHIND LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.** When a scrimmage kick is caught or recovered by the kicking team behind the line of scrimmage, the kicking team may advance, even if the ball has crossed the line and returned behind the line.

**Item 1. Same Series of Downs.** If the ball has returned behind the line untouched by the receiving team beyond the line, and the kicking team catches or recovers the ball, the existing series of downs continues unless the kicking team advances the ball to the line to gain, in which case there is a new series of downs.

**Item 2. New Series of Downs.** If the ball has returned behind the line after being touched by the receiving team beyond the line, and the kicking team catches or recovers the ball, by rule there has been a change of possession, and the kicking team will be awarded a new series of downs.

**ARTICLE 2. KICKERS CATCH OR RECOVER BEYOND LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.** When the kickers catch or recover a kick beyond the line of scrimmage, the ball is dead at the spot of recovery, even if a member of the receiving team has first touched the ball.

**Item 1. Legal Catch or Recovery.** If the receiving team touches the ball beyond the line, a subsequent catch or recovery by the kicking team is legal, but the ball is dead. In the event of such a catch or recovery, it is first-and-10 for the kickers, or if the ball is caught or recovered by the kickers in the receiver's end zone, it is a touchdown for the kickers (7-3-1-d).



**Item 2. Illegal Catch or Recovery.** If the kickers catch or recover a kick beyond the line that has not been touched beyond the line by the receiving team, the ball is dead, and it is first-and-10 for the receivers at the spot of catch or recovery (see 11-4-2 for missed field goals). If a kick from behind the line is touched by the receiving team behind the line, such touching does not make the kicking team eligible to catch or recover the kick beyond the line.

**Item 3. Touchback.** If a player of the kicking team illegally catches or recovers a scrimmage kick, other than a field goal attempt from beyond the 20-yard line, and touches the goal line with any part of his body while in possession of the ball, the ball is dead, and the result of the play is a touchback. For a missed field goal from beyond the 20-yard line, see 11-4-2.

**ARTICLE 3. RECEIVERS CATCH OR RECOVERY.** If the receivers catch or recover any kick, they may advance. For fair catch exception, see 10-2. For exception for a ball that has crossed the goal line, see 9-4-1.

**ARTICLE 4. SIMULTANEOUS CATCH OR RECOVERY.** When a legal kick is simultaneously caught or recovered anywhere by two eligible opposing players, or if the ball is lying on the field of play with no player attempting to recover it, it is awarded to the receivers (7-2-1-i).

## SECTION 4 BALL CROSSES GOAL LINE, TOUCHES GOAL POSTS, OUT OF BOUNDS, DEAD IN FIELD OF PLAY

**ARTICLE 1. BALL CROSSES RECEIVERS' GOAL LINE.** If a scrimmage kick crosses the receivers' goal line from the impetus of the kick, the following shall apply:

- (a) If the ball has not been touched by a player of the receiving team beyond the line of scrimmage, it is dead immediately, and the result of the play is a touchback, when:
  - (1) it touches the ground on or behind the receivers' goal line;
  - (2) it touches a player of the kicking team who is touching the ground on or behind the receivers' goal line; or
  - (3) it touches a player of the kicking team who has touched the ground on or behind the receivers' goal line and has not re-established himself in the field of play. See 11-4-2 for options for missed field goals beyond the 20-yard line.
- (b) If the receivers catch the ball in the end zone, or recover it in the end zone after touching it in the field of play or the end zone, they may advance.
- (c) If the kickers catch or recover the ball in the end zone after the receivers first touch the ball in the field of play or the end zone, it is a touchdown for the kickers.
- (d) If there is a spot of first touching by the kickers outside the receivers' 20-yard line, the receiving team has the option to take possession of the ball at the spot of the first touching.
- (e) If the scrimmage kick is a punt, and the ball goes out of bounds in the field of play after being touched by a receiver in the end zone or in the field of play, it is the receiving team's ball at the out of bounds spot.

**ARTICLE 2. KICK TOUCHES RECEIVERS' GOAL POSTS.** If a missed field goal or Try, or a punt, has touched the receivers' goal post, uprights, or crossbar, the ball is dead in the receivers' end zone, and all customary rules pertaining to punts, missed field goals, and Trys apply.

**ARTICLE 3. KICK TOUCHES KICKERS' GOAL POSTS.** If a scrimmage kick touches the kickers' goal post, uprights, or crossbar, the ball is dead, and it is a safety. See 11-5-1.

**ARTICLE 4. BALL OUT OF BOUNDS OR NOT RECOVERED IN FIELD OF PLAY.** If a scrimmage kick goes out of bounds between the goal lines or is lying in the field of play with no player attempting to recover it, it is the receiver's ball at the dead ball spot, unless the special rules for missed field goals in 11-4-2 apply.

## SECTION 5 SPOTS OF ENFORCEMENT

**ARTICLE 1. SPOTS OF ENFORCEMENT.** If there is a foul from the time of the snap until a legal scrimmage kick ends, enforcement is from the previous spot. This includes a foul during a run prior to a legal kick, and a foul by the kicking team during a missed field goal attempt.

### Exceptions:

- (1) If the offensive team commits a foul in its own end zone, it is a safety if the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot.
- (2) If there is a foul by the kicking team, and the receiving team retains possession throughout the down, the receiving team will have the option of taking the penalty at the previous spot and replaying the down, or adding the penalty yardage on to the dead ball spot.

### Notes:

- (a) *The dead ball spot for scrimmage kicks that result in a touchback is the 20-yard line (see 11-4-2-b for a missed field goal from beyond the 20-yard line).*
- (b) *If there is a foul for an illegal touch inside the five-yard line, the receiving team also has the option of accepting a touchback.*
- (c) *If there is a foul by the kicking team during a missed field goal attempt where the receiving team is awarded the ball (see 11-4-2), enforcement is from the succeeding spot.*
- (3) Penalties for fair catch interference, interference with an opportunity to make a catch, an invalid fair catch signal, or a personal foul (blocking) after a fair catch signal are enforced from the spot of the foul. If the personal foul is not part of a double foul and the opponent has possession at the end of the down, it may be enforced from the dead ball spot. See 14-2-4.
- (4) Except for fouls that are committed in an attempt to block the kick (such as running into or roughing the kicker, defensive holding (pull-and-shoot), leverage, leaping, and pushing teammate(s) into the offensive formation), if the receiving team

## Rule 9

commits a foul **during a scrimmage** kick **play that** crosses the line of scrimmage, the penalty for its infraction will be enforced as if it had been in possession of the ball at the time the foul occurred (a post-possession foul), provided that the receiving team does not lose possession of the ball at any time during the down. The penalty shall be enforced from whichever of the following spots is least beneficial to the receiving team:

- (a) the end of the kick; or
- (b) the spot of the foul.

If the foul occurs in the end zone, it is deemed to have occurred at the 20-yard line, unless enforcement results in a safety (14-4-4).

- (5) For enforcement of a personal or unsportsmanlike conduct foul on a play that results in a score, see 14-2-3; for an illegal bat, see 12-5-1; and for illegally kicking a loose ball, see 12-5-2.

When Team B establishes possession of the ball, a scrimmage kick ends, and a running play begins, and fouls that occur thereafter are enforced from the dead ball spot or the spot of the foul (three-and-one method, 14-3-6).



## RULE 10 OPPORTUNITY TO CATCH A KICK, FAIR CATCH

### SECTION 1 OPPORTUNITY TO CATCH A KICK

**ARTICLE 1. INTERFERENCE.** During a scrimmage kick that crosses the line of scrimmage, or during a free kick, members of the kicking team are prohibited from interfering with any receiver making an attempt to catch the airborne kick, or from obstructing or hindering his path to the airborne kick, regardless of whether any signal was given. **It is not a foul if the scrimmage or free kick is clearly uncatchable. An uncatchable kick is defined as an airborne kick that is either clearly out of bounds or not in the vicinity of the receiver.**

**Item 1. Contact with Receiver.** It is interference if a player of the kicking team contacts the receiver, or causes a passive player of either team to contact the receiver, before or simultaneous to the receiver touching the ball. It is not a foul if a kicking team player is blocked into the receiver or the contact is the result of a foul.

**Item 2. Right of Way.** A receiver who is moving toward a kicked ball that is in flight has the right of way. If opponents obstruct his path to the ball, or cause a passive player of either team to obstruct his path, it is interference, even if there is no contact, or if he catches the ball in spite of the interference, and regardless of whether any signal was given.

#### Penalties:

- (a) **For interference with the opportunity to make a catch when a prior signal has not been made: Loss of 15 yards from the spot of the foul, and the offended team is entitled to put the ball in play by a snap from scrimmage. If such interference is a personal foul for unnecessary roughness, the 15-yard penalty will be enforced from the spot of the foul or the previous spot.**
- (b) **For interfering with a fair catch after a signal: Loss of 15 yards from the spot of the foul. A fair catch is awarded even if the ball is not caught. If such interference is a personal foul for unnecessary roughness, the 15-yard penalty will be enforced from the spot of the foul or the previous spot.**

***Note:** If the foul is not part of a double foul and the opponent has possession at the end of the down, the foul may be enforced from the dead ball spot. See 14-2-4.*

### SECTION 2 FAIR CATCH

**ARTICLE 1. DEFINITION.** A fair catch is an unhindered catch of a scrimmage kick that has crossed the line of scrimmage and has not touched the ground or of a free kick that has not touched the ground, by a player of the receiving team who has given a valid fair catch signal. A fair catch may be followed by a fair catch kick, see 11-4-3.

#### ARTICLE 2. FAIR CATCH SIGNAL.

**Item 1. Valid Fair Catch Signal.** A fair catch signal is valid if it is made while the kick is in flight by a player who fully extends one arm above his helmet and waves it from side to side. A receiver is permitted to legally raise his hand(s) to his helmet to shield his eyes from the sun but is not permitted to raise them above his helmet except to signal for a fair catch.

**Item 2. Invalid Fair Catch Signal.** If a player raises his hand(s) above his shoulder(s) in any other manner, it is an invalid fair catch signal. If there is an invalid fair catch signal, the ball is dead when caught or recovered by any player of the receiving team, but it is not a fair catch. (The ball is not dead if it touches an opponent before or after it strikes the ground. See Article 3-b). A signal given behind the line of scrimmage is ignored.

**Penalty: For an invalid fair catch signal: Loss of five yards from the spot of the signal. If the foul occurs in Team B's end zone during a free kick, it is enforced from the previous spot.**

**Item 3. Muff.** After a valid fair catch signal, the opportunity to catch a kick does not end if the ball is muffed. A player who signaled for a fair catch must have a reasonable opportunity to catch the muffed ball before it hits the ground without interference by members of the kicking team, and regardless of whether the ball strikes another player or an official.

**Penalty: For interference with the opportunity to make a fair catch after a muff: A fair catch is awarded at the spot of the interference even if the ball is not caught. If such interference is a personal foul for unnecessary roughness, a 15-yard penalty will be enforced from the spot of the foul or the previous spot.**

**Item 4. Intentional Muff.** An intentional muff forward prior to a catch is an illegal bat (see 12-5-1).

**Item 5. Illegal Block.** Until the ball touches a teammate or an opponent, a player who makes a valid or invalid fair catch signal is prohibited from blocking or initiating contact with a player of the kicking team.

**Penalty: For an illegal block after a fair catch signal: Loss of 15 yards from the spot of the foul.**

#### ARTICLE 3. RESTRICTIONS.

- (a) If a player of the receiving team makes a valid fair catch signal, and the ball is not touched by a player of the kicking team, the following apply:
  - (1) If he catches the ball, it is dead immediately, and it is a fair catch. If he muffs the ball, but catches it before it touches the ground, it is also a fair catch.
  - (2) If he recovers the ball after it strikes the ground, it is dead immediately, but it is not a fair catch.
  - (3) If the ball is caught or recovered by a teammate who did not make a valid fair catch signal, the ball is dead immediately, but it is not a fair catch.
- (b) If the ball touches a player of the kicking team, before or after it strikes the ground, any player of the receiving team may catch or recover it and advance. If a player of the receiving team who has given a valid fair catch signal catches the ball before it hits the ground and elects not to advance the ball, it is a fair catch.
- (c) If a receiver has made a fair catch, an opponent is prohibited from blocking or tackling him, or causing a passive player of either team to contact him. Incidental contact is not a foul.

**Penalty: For illegal contact with a player who has made a fair catch: Loss of 15 yards from the dead ball spot and disqualification if flagrant.**

**ARTICLE 4. PUTTING BALL IN PLAY AFTER FAIR CATCH.** After a fair catch is made or is awarded as the result of fair catch interference, the receiving team has the option of putting the ball in play by a snap or fair catch kick (drop kick or place kick without a tee) from the spot of the catch or succeeding spot after enforcement of any applicable penalties (3-9 and 11-4-3). This includes the 15-yard penalty enforced from the receiving team's 20-yard line as applicable if the fair catch is made or awarded in his end zone from fair catch interference or illegal contact with the receiver after he has made a fair catch.

**ARTICLE 5. EXTENSION OF A PERIOD.** If time expires during a play in which a player has signaled for a fair catch, the following shall apply:

- (a) If the player makes a fair catch, the receiving team may elect to extend the period with a fair catch kick, but does not have the option to extend the period by a snap from scrimmage.
- (b) If the kicking team interferes with a receiver who has signaled for a fair catch, the receiving team will have the option to extend the period by attempting a fair catch kick or by a snap from scrimmage after enforcement of any applicable penalties.

## RULE 11 SCORING

### SECTION 1 VALUE OF SCORES

**ARTICLE 1. WINNING TEAM.** The team that scores the greater number of points during the entire game is the winner. If a team forfeits a game, the opponent will be declared the winner by a score of 2-0, but the points will not be added to the winning team's record for purposes of offensive production or tiebreakers.

**ARTICLE 2. TYPES OF SCORING PLAYS.** Points are scored as follows:

- (a) Touchdown: 6 points
- (b) Field goal: 3 points
- (c) Safety: 2 points
- (d) Try after touchdown: 1 point (field goal or safety) or 2 points (touchdown)

### SECTION 2 TOUCHDOWN

**ARTICLE 1. TOUCHDOWN PLAYS.** A touchdown is scored, and the ball becomes dead when:

- (a) The ball is on, above, or behind the plane of the opponent's goal line (extended) and is in possession of a runner who has advanced from the field of play into the end zone.
- (b) A ball in possession of an airborne runner is on, above, or behind the plane of the goal line, and some part of the ball passed over or inside the pylon.
- (c) A ball in player possession touches the pylon, provided that, after contact by an opponent, no part of the player's body, except his hands or feet, struck the ground before the ball touched the pylon.
- (d) Any player who is legally inbounds secures possession of a loose ball that is on, above, or behind the opponent's goal line (3-2-4 and 3-2-7).
- (e) The Referee awards a touchdown to a team that has been denied one by a palpably unfair act.

### SECTION 3 TRY

**ARTICLE 1. GENERAL RULES.** After a touchdown, a Try is an opportunity for either team to score one or two additional points during one scrimmage down subject to 4-8-2-c and 16-1-3-a.

The Try begins when the Referee sounds the whistle for play to start. The game clock will not run during the Try. The team that scored the touchdown shall put the ball in play:

- (a) anywhere on or between the inbound lines;
- (b) 15 yards from the defensive team's goal line for a Try kick; or
- (c) two yards from the defensive team's goal line for a Try by pass or run.

After the ball has been declared ready for play, the offensive team may change its choice for any of the above if there is a penalty or charged timeout by either team.

**ARTICLE 2. RESULTS OF A TRY.** During a Try, the following shall apply:

- (a) If a kick results in a field goal by the offense, one point is awarded. An artificial or manufactured tee shall not be permitted to assist in the execution of a Try kick. (The conditions of 11-4-1 must be met).
- (b) If a Try results in a touchdown by either team, two points are awarded.
- (c) If the Try results in what would ordinarily be a safety against either team, one point is awarded to the opponent.
- (d) If any play results in a touchback, the Try is unsuccessful, and there shall be no replay.
- (e) The Try ends when either team scores or the ball is dead by rule.

**ARTICLE 3. FOULS COMMITTED DURING TRY.**

If a foul results in a re-Try, Team A will have the option to enforce the penalty from the spot where it attempted the Try (previous spot) or from the yard line for the other Try option, the location of which is determined by any previously enforced penalty, if applicable.

**Exception:** Defensive pass interference is a spot foul. If the foul is in the end zone, the ball will be placed on the defense's one-yard line, or half the distance to the goal, whichever is more advantageous to Team A. In addition, Team A may have the penalty enforced half the distance from the other Try spot.

**Item 1. Fouls Before the Signal.** If there is a foul by either team after a touchdown and before the ready for play signal, it is enforced on the Try.

**Item 2. Fouls Before the Snap.** If there is a foul by either team which causes a play to be whistled dead prior to the snap, it shall be treated the same as if it had occurred prior to a scrimmage play. If a foul by the defense prevents the attempt of a Try, the offensive team has the option to have the distance penalty assessed on the next Try or on the ensuing kickoff.

**Item 3. Fouls by Team A.** The following applies if there is a foul by Team A:

- (a) If the foul is during a successful Try, the Try shall be repeated, unless the penalty results in a loss of down.
- (b) If the penalty for a foul results in a loss of down, the Try is unsuccessful, and there shall be no replay.
- (c) All fouls committed after a change of possession will result in a distance penalty being assessed on the ensuing kickoff, provided the penalty does not offset with another penalty or negate a successful Try.
- (d) All personal or unsportsmanlike conduct fouls will result in a distance penalty being assessed on the ensuing kickoff, provided the penalty does not offset with another penalty or negate a successful Try.
- (e) If the foul results in a safety, Team B is awarded one point.

**Item 4. Fouls by Team B.** The following applies if there is a foul by Team B:

- (a) All fouls, except for defensive pass interference, will result in the distance penalty being assessed on the ensuing kickoff, provided the penalty does not offset with another penalty, create a re-Try, or negate a score by Team B.
- (b) If the foul results in a safety, Team A is awarded one point.
- (c) If the foul is during an unsuccessful try, Team A may decline the distance penalty, and the down is replayed.

**Item 5. Fouls by Both Teams With No Change of Possession.** If there are fouls by both teams during a Try in which there is not a change of possession, the Try must be replayed (14-5-1), unless the scoring team's only foul is a dead ball foul after a score.

**Item 6. Fouls by Both Teams With Change of Possession.** If both teams foul during a Try in which there is a change or changes of possession, the following shall apply:

- (a) If both teams foul before the first change of possession, the Try shall be repeated.
- (b) If Team B fouls before the first change of possession, the Try shall be repeated.
- (c) If Team A fouls before the first change of possession, the Try shall be deemed to have failed.
- (d) If neither team fouls before the first change of possession, and both teams subsequently commit fouls, the Try shall be deemed to have failed.

**Item 7. Fouls After a Try.** If there is a foul by either team after a Try, it is enforced on the succeeding **free kick**. If there are fouls by both teams, normal enforcement rules apply.

**ARTICLE 4. KICKOFF AFTER TRY.** After a Try, the team on defense during the Try shall receive the succeeding free kick (6-1-1-a).

## SECTION 4 FIELD GOAL

**ARTICLE 1. SUCCESSFUL FIELD GOAL.** A field goal is scored when all of the following conditions are met:

- (a) The kick must be a place kick or drop kick made by the offense from on or behind the line of scrimmage or from the spot of a fair catch (fair catch kick). If a fair catch is made or awarded outside the inbound line, the spot of the kick is the nearest inbound line.
- (b) After the ball is kicked, it must not touch the ground or any player of the offensive team before it passes through the goal.
- (c) The entire ball must pass through the vertical plane of the goal, which is the area above the crossbar and between the uprights or, if above the uprights, between their outside edges. If the ball passes through the goal, and returns through the goal without striking the ground or some object or person beyond the goal, the attempt is unsuccessful.

**ARTICLE 2. MISSED FIELD GOALS.** If there is a missed field goal attempt that crosses the line of scrimmage, and the ball has not been touched by the receivers beyond the line of scrimmage in the field of play, or in the end zone before the ball has touched the ground in the end zone, the following shall apply:

- (a) If the spot of the kick was inside the receivers' 20-yard line, it is the receivers' ball at the 20-yard line; or
- (b) If the spot of the kick was from the receivers' 20-yard line or beyond the receivers' 20-yard line, it is the receivers' ball at the spot of the kick.

### Exceptions:

The special rules pertaining to field goals in (a) and (b) are not applicable, and all general rules for a scrimmage kick will apply when there is a missed field goal and:

- (1) the ball is touched by the receivers beyond the line of scrimmage in the field of play or in the end zone before the ball has become dead; or
- (2) the scrimmage kick ends behind the line of scrimmage, and the ball has not been touched by the receivers beyond the line of scrimmage.

**Note:** If a foul occurs during an unsuccessful field goal attempt in (1) or (2) above, Rule 14-4-8 governs.

### SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES:

- (1) If the receivers do not touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage in the field of play or in the end zone, the ball is dead as soon as it touches the ground in the end zone, and it is the receivers' ball at the spot of the kick, or at the 20-yard line if the attempt was from inside the 20-yard line.
- (2) If the ball goes out of bounds after it is first touched by the receivers beyond the line of scrimmage in the field of play, it is the receivers' ball at the out of bounds spot.
- (3) If the receivers first touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage in the field of play or in the end zone, and the kickers recover, the ball belongs to the kickers at the spot of recovery. If the recovery is in the end zone, it is a touchdown.
- (4) If the receivers first touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage in the field of play, and without any new impetus, the ball rolls into the end zone where it is declared dead in the possession of the receivers, it is a touchback.
- (5) For a successful field goal, or for an unsuccessful attempt that does not land in the field of play, the maximum amount of time that can run off the game clock is five seconds.

**ARTICLE 3. FAIR CATCH KICK.** The rules for a field goal attempt from scrimmage apply to a field goal attempt following a fair catch (a fair catch kick).

### Exceptions:

- (1) The fair catch kick line for the kicking team is the yard line through the most forward point from which the ball is kicked.
- (2) The fair catch kick line for the receiving team is the yard line 10 yards in advance of the kicking team's fair catch kick line.
- (3) Though this is not a free kick, the rules for **onside** free kick formation apply (6-1-6).

**Note:** The kicking team cannot possess the ball unless it has first been touched by the receivers.

**ARTICLE 4. NO TEE.** An artificial or manufactured tee shall not be permitted to assist in the execution of a field goal.

**ARTICLE 5. FOREIGN ARTICLES.** No article of any type may be placed on the field, or used in any manner, to assist a player in the execution of a field goal and/or Try attempt. Nothing other than a hand or finger may be used to mark the spot or the vicinity of a kick or hold.

**ARTICLE 6. BALL NEXT IN PLAY.** After a field goal, the team scored upon will receive the succeeding free kick (6-1-1-a).

## SECTION 5 SAFETY

**ARTICLE 1. SAFETY.** It is a safety:

- (a) when the offense commits a foul behind its own goal line and the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot (see also 14-2-2-b); or
- (b) when an impetus by a team sends the ball behind its own goal line, and the ball is dead in the end zone in its possession, or the ball is out of bounds behind the goal line.

### Exceptions:

It is not a safety:

- (1) If a forward pass from behind the line of scrimmage is incomplete in the end zone.
- (2) If a defensive player, in the field of play, intercepts a pass or catches or recovers a fumble, backward pass, scrimmage kick, free kick, or fair catch kick, and his original momentum carries him into his end zone where the ball is declared dead in his team's possession. The ball belongs to the defensive team at the spot where the player's foot or other body part touched the ground to establish possession. If that spot is in the end zone, the result of the play is a touchback, even if the ball is not on, above, or beyond the goal line (11-6-1).
  - (a) If a player of the team which intercepts, catches, or recovers the ball commits a live ball foul in the end zone, it is a safety.
  - (b) If a player who intercepts, catches, or recovers the ball throws a completed or intercepted illegal forward pass from the end zone, the ball remains alive. If his opponent intercepts the illegal pass and scores, it is a touchdown.
  - (c) If a player of the team which intercepts, catches, or recovers the ball commits a foul in the field of play, and the ball becomes dead in the end zone, the basic spot is the spot of the change of possession.
  - (d) If the spot where possession changed is inside the one-yard line, the ball is to be spotted at the one-yard line.

### Notes:

- (1) *A ball in the end zone which is carried toward the field of play is still in the end zone until the entire ball is in the field of play (3-11-4).*
- (2) *The impetus is always attributed to the offense, unless the defense creates a new force that sends the ball behind its own goal line by muffing a ball which is at rest or nearly at rest, or by batting or kicking any loose ball (3-16).*

**ARTICLE 2. BALL IN PLAY AFTER SAFETY.** After a safety, the team scored upon must put the ball in play by a free kick (punt, drop kick, or place kick) from its 20-yard line, unless an extension exception applies (4-8-2-g). An artificial or manufactured tee may be used. See 6-1-1-b and 6-1-3.

## SECTION 6 TOUCHBACK

**ARTICLE 1. DEFINITION.** It is a touchback if the ball is dead on or behind the goal line a team is defending, provided that the impetus comes from an opponent, and that it is not a touchdown or an incomplete forward pass. A ball in the end zone which is carried toward the field of play is still in the end zone until the entire ball is in the field of play (3-11-4).

**ARTICLE 2. TOUCHBACK SITUATIONS.** When a team provides the impetus (3-16) that sends a loose ball behind its opponent's goal line, it is a touchback:

- (a) if the ball is dead in the opponent's possession in its end zone;
- (b) if the ball is out of bounds behind the goal line (see 8-7-3-Item 4-a) including if the ball hits the pylon;
- (c) if a scrimmage kick has not been touched by a player of the receiving team beyond the line of scrimmage, and the ball:
  - (1) touches the ground on or behind the receiver's goal line;
  - (2) touches a player of the kicking team who is touching the ground on or behind the receiver's goal line; or
  - (3) touches a player of the kicking team who has touched the ground on or behind the receiver's goal line and has not re-established himself in the field of play (see 11-4-2-b for exception for a missed field goal from beyond the 20-yard line).
- (d) if any legal or illegal kick touches the receivers' goal posts, crossbar, or uprights, other than one which scores a field goal;
- (e) if the kickers interfere with the opportunity to catch an airborne kick or with a fair catch behind the receivers' goal line (10-1 and 10-2); or
- (f) if a player of the kicking team illegally catches or recovers a scrimmage kick in the field of play, and carries the ball across the goal line, or touches the goal line with any part of his body while in possession of the ball. For exception for a missed field goal from beyond the 20-yard line, see 11-4-2-b.

**Note:** *If the impetus is a scrimmage kick, and there has been a spot of first touching by the kickers beyond the receivers' 20-yard line, the receivers shall have the option of taking possession of the ball at the spot of first touching.*

**ARTICLE 3. BALL NEXT IN PLAY.** After a touchback, the team that has been awarded the touchback shall next snap the ball at its 20-yard line from any point on or between the inbound lines, or from its 30-yard line or 20-yard line (as applicable by Rule 6-1-5) from any point on or between the inbounds lines if the touchback results from a free kick.

## RULE 12     PLAYER CONDUCT

### SECTION 1     BLOCKING, USE OF HANDS AND ARMS

**ARTICLE 1. LEGAL AND ILLEGAL BLOCK.** A player of either team may block (obstruct or impede) an opponent at any time, provided that the act is not:

- (a) pass interference (see Rule 8, Section 5, Article 1);
- (b) illegal contact (see Rule 8, Section 4);
- (c) fair catch interference or interference with the opportunity to catch a kick (see Rule 10, Section 1);
- (d) clipping against a non-runner (see Section 2, Article 1);
- (e) a chop block (see Section 2, Article 5);
- (f) an illegal crackback block (see Section 2, Article 6);
- (g) an illegal low block during a free kick, a scrimmage kick, after a change of possession, or outside the Tight End Box (see Section 2, Article 4);
- (h) unnecessary roughness (see Section 2, Article 8);
- (i) roughing the passer (see Section 2, Article 11);
- (j) an illegal cut block (see Rule 8, Section 4, Article 5);
- (k) roughing the kicker or holder (see Section 2, Articles 12 and 13);
- (l) offensive (see Section 1, Article 3(c)) or defensive (Section 1, Article 6) holding;
- (m) illegal use of hands (see Section 1, Article 3-a);
- (n) an illegal block in the back above the waist (see Section 1, Article 3-b);
- (o) tripping (see Section 2, Article 14);
- (p) an illegal peel back block (see Section 2, Article 2);
- (q) an illegal blindside block (see Section 2, Article 7);
- (r) an illegal double team block (see Rule 6, Section 2, Article 1); or
- (s) an illegal wedge block (see Rule 6, Section 2, Article 1).

**ARTICLE 2. LEGAL BLOCK BY OFFENSIVE PLAYER.** An offensive player is permitted to block an opponent by contacting him with his head, shoulders, hands, and/or outer surface of the forearm, or with any other part of his body that is not prohibited by another rule.

A blocker may use his arms, or open or closed hands, to contact an opponent on or outside the opponent's frame (the body of an opponent below the neck that is presented to the blocker), provided that he does not materially restrict him. The blocker must work immediately to bring his hands inside the opponent's frame, and as the play develops, the blocker is permitted to work for and maintain his position against an opponent, provided that he does not illegally clip or illegally push from behind.

An offensive player is permitted to use his hands or arms to restrict an opponent:

- (a) **If he is a runner.** A runner may ward off opponents with his hands and arms. He may also lay his hand on a teammate or push him into an opponent, but he may not grasp or hold on to a teammate.
- (b) **During a loose ball that has touched the ground.** An offensive player may use his hands/arms legally to block or otherwise push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball. See specific fumble, pass, or kick rules.
- (c) **A kicking team player.** See 6-2 and 9-1-4 for blocking restrictions during a kick.

**ARTICLE 3. ILLEGAL BLOCK BY OFFENSIVE PLAYER.** It is a foul if an offensive blocker:

- (a) Thrusts his hands forward above the frame of an opponent to forcibly contact him on the head or neck in a direct or prolonged manner; or

**Penalty: For illegal use of hands by the offense: Loss of 10 yards.**

- (b) Blocks an opponent (from behind) in the back above the opponent's waist, or uses his hands or arms to push an opponent from behind in a manner that affects his movement, except in close-line play. This prohibition also applies to a player of the kicking team while the ball is in flight during a scrimmage kick.

The use of hands on the back is not a foul when:

- (1) a player is making a personal attempt to recover a loose ball;
- (2) the opponent turns away from the blocker when contact is imminent;
- (3) both of the blocker's hands are on the opponent's side (if either hand is on the back, it is a foul).

**Penalty: For an illegal block in the back above the waist by the offense: Loss of 10 yards.**

- (c) Uses his hands or arms to materially restrict or alter the defender's path or angle of pursuit. It is a foul regardless of whether the blocker's hands are inside or outside the frame of the defender's body. Material restrictions include but are not limited to:
  - (1) grabbing or tackling an opponent;
  - (2) hooking, jerking, twisting, or turning him; or
  - (3) pulling him to the ground.

**Penalty: For holding by the offense: Loss of 10 yards.**

**Blocking Notes:**

- (1) When a defensive player is held by an offensive player during the following situations, Offensive holding will not be called:
  - (a) if the runner is being tackled simultaneously by any defensive player;
  - (b) if the runner simultaneously goes out of bounds;
  - (c) if a fair catch is made simultaneously;
  - (d) if the action clearly occurs after a forward pass has been thrown to a receiver beyond the line of scrimmage;



- (e) if the action occurs away from the point of attack and not within close-line play;
  - (f) if a free kick results in a touchback;
  - (g) if a scrimmage kick simultaneously becomes a touchback;
  - (h) if the action is part of a double team block, unless the defender splits the double team, gets to the outside of either blocker, or is taken to the ground; or
  - (i) if, during a defensive charge, a defensive player uses a "rip" technique that puts an offensive player in a position that would normally be holding, unless and until the defender's feet are taken away from him by the blocker's action.
- (2) If a blocker falls on or pushes down a defender whose momentum is carrying him to the ground, Offensive holding will not be called unless the blocker prevents the defender from rising from the ground.

**ARTICLE 4. ASSISTING THE RUNNER AND INTERLOCKING INTERFERENCE.** No offensive player may:

- (a) pull a runner in any direction at any time;
- (b) use interlocking interference, by grasping a teammate or by using his hands or arms to encircle the body of a teammate in an effort to block an opponent; or
- (c) push or throw his body against a teammate to aid him in an attempt to obstruct an opponent or to recover a loose ball.

**Penalty: For assisting the runner, interlocking interference, or illegal use of hands, arms, or body by the offense: Loss of 10 yards.**

**ARTICLE 5. LEGAL USE OF HANDS OR ARMS BY DEFENSE.** A defensive player may use his hands, arms, or body to push, pull, or ward off offensive players:

- (a) when he is defending himself against an obstructing opponent while attempting to reach the runner;
- (b) when an opponent is obviously attempting to block him;
- (c) in a personal attempt to reach a loose ball that has touched the ground during a backward pass, fumble, or kick;
- (d) during a forward pass that has crossed the neutral zone and has been touched by any player; and
- (e) during a kick. See 6-2 and 9-1-4 for blocking restrictions during a kick.

**ARTICLE 6. DEFENSIVE HOLDING.** It is a foul for defensive holding if:

- (a) a defensive player tackles or holds any opponent other than a runner, except as permitted in Article 5. For this purpose, a player is considered a runner while in the pocket if a teammate pretends to give him the ball and/or he pretends to possess the ball.
- (b) during a punt, field goal attempt, or Try kick attempt, B1 grabs and pulls an offensive player out of the way, allowing B2 to shoot the gap (pull-and-shoot) in an attempt to block an apparent kick, except if B1 is advancing toward the kicker.

**Penalty: For defensive holding: Loss of five yards and an automatic first down.**

**ARTICLE 7. ILLEGAL USE OF HANDS BY DEFENSE.** It is a foul if a defensive player thrusts his hands or arms forward above the frame of an opponent to forcibly contact him on the head or neck in a direct or prolonged manner.

**Penalty: For illegal use of hands by the defense: Loss of five yards and an automatic first down.**

## SECTION 2 PERSONAL FOULS

**ARTICLE 1. CLIPPING.** Clipping is blocking an opponent from behind below the waist, and is prohibited against a non-runner. This does not apply to offensive blocking in close-line play where it is legal to clip above the knee(s), but it is illegal to clip at or below the knee(s). See 3-6, close-line play.

**Exception:** An offensive lineman may not clip a defender above the knees who, at the snap, is aligned on the line of scrimmage opposite another offensive lineman who is more than one position away, and the defender is responding to the flow of the ball away from the blocker. Example: An offensive tackle cannot clip a defensive nose tackle on a sweep away.

If there is a block from the side, or if an opponent turns his back as the block is being made, it is not clipping if the opponent is able to see or ward off the block.

If an offensive player's block (legal or illegal) is followed by the blocker rolling up on the back or side of the leg(s) of a defender, it is clipping, including in close-line play.

When a blocker, who is moving in the same direction as an opponent, initially contacts the opponent on his side, and subsequently contacts the opponent below his waist from behind, it is not clipping if the contact is continuous.

**Penalty: For clipping: Loss of 15 yards.**

**ARTICLE 2. PEEL BACK BLOCK.** An offensive player cannot initiate contact on the side and below the waist against an opponent if:

- (a) the blocker is moving toward his own end line; and
- (b) he approaches the opponent from behind or from the side unless his near shoulder completely crosses the front of both of his opponent's legs.

**Penalty: For a peel back block: Loss of 15 yards.**

**ARTICLE 3. ILLEGAL CUT BLOCK.** See 8-4-5.

**ARTICLE 4. BLOCKING BELOW THE WAIST.** Blocks below the waist are prohibited in the following situations:

- (a) By players of either team after a change of possession; or
- (b) By players of the kicking team after a free kick, safety kick, fair catch kick, punt, field goal attempt, or Try kick; or
- (c) By players of the receiving team during a down in which there is a free kick, safety kick, fair catch kick, punt, field goal attempt, or Try kick; or

- (d) By players of either team during a scrimmage down prior to a change of possession unless the contact occurs in the tight end box. (**Note:** *Players are prohibited from initiating contact below the waist of an opponent outside the tight end box (See 3-33), except against a runner or a player who is attempting to catch a forward or backward pass.*)

**Note:** *The following blocking restrictions may result in a foul even if they occur in the tight end box:*

- (i) *Illegal cut block. See 8-4-5.*
- (ii) *Clipping. See 12-2-1.*
- (iii) *Peel back block. See 12-2-2.*
- (iv) *Chop block. See 12-2-5.*
- (v) *Crackback block. See 12-2-6.*

**Penalty: For illegally blocking below the waist: Loss of 15 yards.**

**ARTICLE 5. CHOP BLOCK.** All chop blocks are illegal. A chop block is a high/low double team block by the offense in which one offensive player (designated as A1 for purposes of this rule) blocks a defensive player in the area of the thigh or lower while another offensive player (A2) engages that same defensive player above the waist. The order of the blocks is irrelevant. It is not a foul if the defender initiates the contact with the blocker, or if the blocker is trying to slip or escape from the defendant and any engagement with him is incidental.

Chop blocks include, but are not limited to, the following situations:

- (a) A1 chops a defensive player while the defensive player is physically engaged above the waist by the blocking attempt of A2.
- (b) A2 physically engages a defensive player above the waist with a blocking attempt, and A1 chops the defensive player after the contact by A2 has been broken and while A2 is still confronting the defensive player.
- (c) A1 chops a defensive player while A2 confronts the defensive player in a pass-blocking posture but is not physically engaged with the defensive player ("lure").
- (d) A1 blocks a defensive player in the area of the thigh or lower, and A2, simultaneously or immediately after the block by A1, engages the defensive player high ("reverse chop").
- (e) A1 is lined up in the backfield at the snap and subsequently chops a defensive player engaged above the waist by A2.
- (f) A1, an offensive lineman, chops a defensive player after the defensive player has been engaged by A2 (high or low).

**Penalty: For chop block: Loss of 15 yards.**

#### **ARTICLE 6. CRACKBACK BLOCK.**

**Item 1. Definition.** It is an illegal crackback block if the following conditions are fulfilled:

The block occurs within an area five yards on either side of the line of scrimmage, including within close-line play, by an offensive player who is moving toward the position from which the ball was snapped; and

- (a) the offensive player was in a set position and aligned more than two yards outside an offensive tackle (flexed) when the ball was snapped; or
- (b) the offensive player was in a backfield position when the ball was snapped and moved to a position more than two yards outside an offensive tackle; or
- (c) the offensive player was in a backfield position and in motion when the ball was snapped.

**Item 2. Prohibited Contact.** The following is prohibited against a player who is the recipient of a crackback block:

- (a) Contacting him below the waist; and
- (b) **Contact prohibited against a player in a defenseless posture (Rule 12, Section 2, Article 9(b)(1-3)).**

**Penalty: For a crackback block: Loss of 15 yards.**

**ARTICLE 7. BLINDSIDE BLOCK.** It is a foul if a player initiates a block when his path is toward or parallel to his own end line and makes forcible contact to his opponent with his helmet, forearm, or shoulder, unless the contact occurs in close-line play prior to the ball leaving that area. The ball is not considered to have left that area if the player who takes the snap, either from shotgun position or from under center, retreats in the pocket immediately or with slight delay, and hands the ball to another player, or runs with the ball himself during a designed play. Any forcible contact in close-line play is still subject to the restrictions for crackback and peel back blocks.

**Penalty: For a blindside block: Loss of 15 yards.**

**ARTICLE 8. UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS.** There shall be no unnecessary roughness. This shall include, but will not be limited to:

- (a) using the foot or any part of the leg to strike an opponent with a whipping motion (leg whip);
- (b) forcibly contacting a runner when he is out of bounds;

**Note:** *Defensive players must make an effort to avoid contact. Players on defense are responsible for knowing when a runner has crossed the boundary line, except in doubtful cases where he might step on a boundary line and continue parallel with it.*

- (c) a player of the receiving team who has gone out of bounds and blocks a kicking team player out of bounds during the kick. If this occurs on a kick from scrimmage, post-possession rules will apply if appropriate (9-5-1);
- (d) running, diving into, or throwing the body against or on a runner whose forward progress has been stopped, who has slid or taken a knee, or who has declared himself down by going to the ground untouched and has made no attempt to advance. See 7-2-1-d-Notes regarding a sliding player;
- (e) running, diving into, or throwing the body against or on any player on the ground either before or after the ball is dead;
- (f) throwing the runner to the ground after the ball is dead;

- (g) unnecessarily running into, diving into, or throwing the body against or on a player who (1) is out of the play or (2) should not have reasonably anticipated such contact by an opponent, before or after the ball is dead;
- (h) pulling an opponent off a pile of players in an aggressive or forcible manner; or
- (i) a kicker/punter, who is standing still or fading backward after the ball has been kicked, is out of the play and must not be unnecessarily contacted by the receiving team through the end of the down or until he assumes a distinctly defensive position. However, a kicker/punter is a defenseless player through the conclusion of the down (see 12-2-9-a-8).

**Penalty: For unnecessary roughness: Loss of 15 yards. The player may be disqualified if the action is judged by the official(s) to be flagrant. If the foul is by the defense, it is also an automatic first down.**

**ARTICLE 9. PLAYERS IN A DEFENSELESS POSTURE.** It is a foul if a player initiates unnecessary contact against a player who is in a defenseless posture. A player who initiates contact against a defenseless opponent is responsible for avoiding an illegal act. A standard of strict liability applies for any contact against an opponent, even if his body position is in motion, and irrespective of any acts by him, such as ducking his head or curling up his body in anticipation of contact.

- (a) Players in a defenseless posture are:
  - (1) A player in the act of or just after throwing a pass (passing posture).
  - (2) A receiver running a pass route when the defender approaches from the side or behind. If the receiver becomes a blocker or assumes a blocking posture, he is no longer a defenseless player.
  - (3) A player attempting to catch a pass who has not had time to clearly become a runner. If the player is capable of avoiding or warding off the impending contact of an opponent, he is no longer a defenseless player.
  - (4) The intended receiver of a pass in the action during and immediately following an interception or potential interception. If the player is capable of avoiding or warding off the impending contact of an opponent, he is no longer a defenseless player. Violations of this provision will be enforced after the interception, and the intercepting team will maintain possession.
  - (5) A runner already in the grasp of a tackler and whose forward progress has been stopped.
  - (6) A kickoff or punt returner attempting to field a kick in the air who has not had time to clearly become a runner. If the player is capable of avoiding or warding off the impending contact of an opponent, he is no longer a defenseless player.
  - (7) A player on the ground.
  - (8) A kicker/punter during the kick or during the return (also see Article 8-i for additional restrictions against a kicker/punter).
  - (9) A quarterback at any time after a change of possession (also see Article 11-e for additional restrictions against a quarterback after a change of possession).
  - (10) A player who receives an illegal blindside block.
  - (11) A player who receives an illegal crackback block.
  - (12) The offensive player who attempts a snap during **any scrimmage kick**. He is no longer a defenseless player after he has had an opportunity to defend himself or moves downfield.
- (b) Prohibited contact against a player who is in a defenseless posture is listed below. However, these provisions do not prohibit incidental contact by the mask or helmet in the course of a conventional tackle or block on an opponent:
  - (1) forcibly hitting the defenseless player's head or neck area with the helmet, facemask, forearm, or shoulder, even if the initial contact is lower than the player's neck, and regardless of whether the defensive player also uses his arms to tackle the defenseless player by encircling or grasping him;
  - (2) lowering the head and making forcible contact with any part of the helmet against any part of the defenseless player's body; or
  - (3) illegally launching into a defenseless opponent. It is an illegal launch if a player (i) leaves one or both feet prior to contact to spring forward and upward into his opponent, and (ii) uses any part of his helmet to initiate forcible contact against any part of his opponent's body. (This does not apply to contact against a runner, unless the runner is still considered to be a defenseless player, as defined in Article 9).

**Penalty: For unnecessary roughness: Loss of 15 yards and an automatic first down. The player may be disqualified if the action is judged by the official(s) to be flagrant.**

**ARTICLE 10. IMPERMISSIBLE USE OF THE HELMET.** It is a foul if a player:

- (a) lowers his head and makes forcible contact with his helmet against an opponent; or
- (b) uses any part of his helmet or facemask to butt or make forcible contact to an opponent's head or neck area.

These provisions do not prohibit incidental contact by the mask or the helmet in the course of a conventional tackle or block on an opponent.

**Penalty: For impermissible use of the helmet: Loss of 15 yards. If the foul is by the defense, it is also an automatic first down. The player may be disqualified.**

**ARTICLE 11. ROUGHING THE PASSER.** Because the act of passing often puts the quarterback (or any other player attempting a pass) in a position where he is particularly vulnerable to injury, special rules against roughing the passer apply. Players in a passing posture are considered to be a player in a defenseless posture. Any physical acts against a player who is in a passing posture (i.e. before, during, or after a pass) which, in the game official's judgment, are unwarranted by the circumstances of the play will be called as fouls. The following principles apply:

- (a) Roughing will be called if, in the game official's judgment, a pass rusher clearly should have known that the ball had already left the passer's hand before contact was made; pass rushers are responsible for being aware of the position of the ball in passing situations; the game official will use the release of the ball from the passer's hand as his guideline that the passer is now fully protected; once a pass has been released by a passer, a rushing defender may make direct contact with the passer only up through the rusher's first step after such release (prior to second step hitting the ground); thereafter the rusher must

be making an attempt to avoid contact and must not continue to “drive through” or otherwise forcibly contact the passer; incidental or inadvertent contact by a player who is easing up or being blocked into the passer will not be considered significant.

- (b) A rushing defender is prohibited from committing such intimidating and punishing acts as “stuffing” a passer into the ground or unnecessarily wrestling or driving him down after the passer has thrown the ball, even if the rusher makes his initial contact with the passer within the one-step limitation provided for in (a) above. When tackling a passer who is in a defenseless posture (e.g., during or just after throwing a pass), a defensive player must not unnecessarily or violently throw him down or land on top of him with all or most of the defender’s weight. Instead, the defensive player must strive to fall to the side of the quarterback’s body, or to brace his fall with his arms to avoid landing on the quarterback with all or most of his body weight.
- (c) In covering the passer position, game officials will be particularly alert to fouls in which defenders impermissibly use the helmet and/or facemask to hit the passer, or use hands, arms, or other parts of the body to hit the passer forcibly in the head or neck area (see also the other unnecessary roughness rules covering these subjects). A defensive player must not use his helmet against a passer who is in a defenseless posture—for example, (1) forcibly hitting the passer’s head or neck area with the helmet or facemask, even if the initial contact of the defender’s helmet or facemask is lower than the passer’s neck, and regardless of whether the defensive player also uses his arms to tackle the passer by encircling or grasping him; or (2) lowering the head and making forcible contact with any part of the helmet against any part of the passer’s body. This rule does not prohibit incidental contact by the mask or the helmet in the course of a conventional tackle on a passer.
- (d) A rushing defender is prohibited from forcibly hitting in the knee area or below a passer who has one or both feet on the ground, even if the initial contact is above the knee. It is not a foul if the defender is blocked (or fouled) into the passer and has no opportunity to avoid him. A defender cannot initiate a roll or launch and forcibly hit the passer in the knee area or below, even if he is being contacted by another player. It is not a foul if the defender swipes or grabs a passer in the knee area or below in an attempt to tackle him, provided he does not make forcible contact with the helmet, shoulder, chest, or forearm.
- (e) A passer who is standing still or fading backward after the ball has left his hand is obviously out of the play and must not be unnecessarily contacted by an opponent through the end of the down or until the passer becomes a blocker, or a runner, or, in the event of a change of possession during the down, until he assumes a distinctly defensive position. However, at any time after the change of possession, it is a foul if:
  - (1) an opponent forcibly hits the quarterback’s head or neck area with his helmet, facemask, forearm, or shoulder
  - (2) if an opponent lowers his head and makes forcible contact with any part of his helmet against any part of the passer’s body. This provision does not prohibit incidental contact by the mask or the helmet in the course of a conventional block.
- (f) When the passer goes outside the pocket area and either continues moving with the ball (without attempting to advance the ball as a runner) or throws while on the run, he loses the protection of the one-step rule provided for in (a) above, and the protection against a low hit provided for in (d) above, but he remains covered by all the other special protections afforded to a passer in the pocket (b, c, and e), as well as the regular unnecessary roughness rules applicable to all player positions. If the passer stops behind the line and clearly establishes a passing posture, he will then be covered by all of the special protections for passers.
- (g) The game official must blow the play dead as soon as the passer is clearly in the grasp and control of any tackler behind the line, and the passer’s safety is in jeopardy.

**Penalty: For roughing the passer: Loss of 15 yards and an automatic first down; disqualification, if flagrant.**

**ARTICLE 12. ROUGHING/RUNNING INTO THE KICKER.** No defensive player may run into or rough a kicker who kicks from behind the line unless such contact:

- (a) is incidental to and occurs after the defender has touched the kick in flight, or occurs simultaneously with the kicker kicking the ball;
- (b) is caused by the kicker’s own motions;
- (c) occurs during a quick kick or **when the kicker carries the ball outside the pocket area, unless he clearly establishes a kicking posture;**
- (d) occurs during or after a run behind the line;
- (e) occurs after the kicker **or holder** recovers a loose ball on the ground;
- (f) occurs because a defender is pushed or blocked (causing a change of direction) into the kicker; or
- (g) is the result of a foul by an opponent

**Item 1. Roughing the kicker.** It is a foul for roughing the kicker if a defensive player:

- (a) contacts the plant leg of the kicker while his kicking leg is still in the air;
- (b) slides into or contacts the kicker when both of the kicker’s feet are on the ground. It is not a foul if the contact is not severe, or if the kicker returns both feet to the ground prior to the contact and falls over a defender on the ground; or
- (c) commits any other act of unnecessary roughness.

**Item 2. Running into the Kicker.** It is a foul for running into the kicker if a defensive player:

- (a) contacts the kicking leg or foot of the kicker, even if the kicker is airborne when the contact occurs; or
- (b) slides under the kicker, preventing him from returning both feet to the ground.

**Penalties:**

- (1) **For roughing the kicker: Loss of 15 yards from the previous spot (personal foul) and an automatic first down. The player may be disqualified if the action is flagrant.**
- (2) **For running into the kicker: Loss of five yards from the previous spot (not a personal foul). There is not an automatic first down.**

**ARTICLE 13. ROUGHING THE HOLDER.** It is a foul for roughing the holder if a defensive player forcibly contacts the holder of a place kick, unless the contact:

- (a) is incidental and occurs after the defender has touched the kick in flight;
- (b) is caused because a defender is blocked into the holder;
- (c) occurs after the holder recovers a ball that has touched the ground; or
- (d) commits any other act of unnecessary roughness.

**Penalty: For roughing the holder: Loss of 15 yards from the previous spot (personal foul) and an automatic first down. The player may be disqualified if the action is flagrant.**

*Note: When two defensive players are making a bona fide attempt to block a kick from scrimmage (punt, drop kick, and/or place kick), and one of them runs into the kicker or holder after the ball has left the kicker's foot at the same instant the second player blocks the kick, the foul for running into the kicker or holder shall not be enforced, unless in the judgment of the Referee, the player running into the kicker or holder was clearly the direct cause of the kick being blocked.*

**ARTICLE 14. STRIKING, KICKING, TRIPPING OR KNEEING OPPONENTS.** All players are prohibited from:

- (a) striking an opponent with his fists;
- (b) kicking or kneeing an opponent;
- (c) tripping an opponent, including the runner;
- (d) striking, swinging at, or clubbing the head or neck of an opponent with the wrist(s), arm(s), elbow(s), or hand(s); or

**Exceptions:** Contact to the head, neck, or face of an opponent with the palm of the hand is permitted:

- (1) by a defensive player who is attempting to ward off an offensive player at the line of scrimmage, provided that it is not a repeated act against the same opponent during any one contact; or
- (2) by any player in a personal attempt to recover a loose ball.
- (e) striking an opponent below the shoulders with his forearm or elbows by turning the trunk of his body at the waist, or by pivoting, or by any other way that is clearly unnecessary.

**Penalty: For prohibited acts in (a-e) above: Loss of 15 yards. If any of the fouls is judged by the official(s) to be flagrant, the offender may be disqualified as long as the entire action is observed by the official(s). If the foul is by the defense, it is also an automatic first down.**

**ARTICLE 15. TWISTING, PULLING, OR TURNING THE FACEMASK OR HELMET OPENING.** If a player grasps an opponent's facemask or helmet opening, he must immediately release it. He shall not grasp and control, twist, turn, push, or pull the facemask or helmet opening of an opponent in any direction.

**Penalty: For twisting, turning, pushing, pulling, or controlling the mask or helmet opening: Loss of 15 yards. The player may be disqualified if the action is flagrant. If the foul is by the defense, it is also an automatic first down.**

**ARTICLE 16. HORSE-COLLAR TACKLE.** No player shall grab the inside collar of the back or the side of the shoulder pads or jersey, or grab the jersey at the name plate or above, and pull the runner toward the ground. This does not apply to a runner who is in the pocket or in the area defined by close-line play. If his knees are buckled by the action, it is a foul, even if the runner is not pulled completely to the ground.

**Penalty: For a horse-collar tackle: Loss of 15 yards and an automatic first down.**

**ARTICLE 17. USE OF HELMET AS A WEAPON.** A player may not use a helmet that is no longer worn by anyone as a weapon to strike, swing at, or throw at an opponent.

**Penalty: For illegal use of a helmet as a weapon: Loss of 15 yards and automatic disqualification. If the foul is by the defense, it is also an automatic first down.**

**ARTICLE 18. HIP-DROP TACKLE.** It is a foul if a player uses the following technique to bring a runner to the ground:

- (a) grabs the runner with both hands or wraps the runner with both arms; and
- (b) unweights himself by swiveling and dropping his hips and/or lower body, landing on and trapping the runner's leg(s) at or below the knee

**Penalty: For a hip-drop tackle: Loss of 15 yards and an automatic first down.**

**ARTICLE 19. OTHER PERSONAL FOULS.** Fouls that include a 15-yard penalty but are not listed in this Section or in Section 3, are considered Personal Fouls for penalty enforcement purposes.

### **SECTION 3 UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

**ARTICLE 1. PROHIBITED ACTS.** There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct. This applies to any act which is contrary to the generally understood principles of sportsmanship. Such acts specifically include, among others:

- (a) Throwing a punch, or a forearm, or kicking at an opponent, even though no contact is made.
- (b) Using abusive, threatening, or insulting language or gestures to opponents, teammates, officials, or representatives of the League.
- (c) Using baiting or taunting acts or words that may engender ill will between teams.
- (d) Any violent gesture, or an act that is sexually suggestive or offensive.
- (e) Unnecessary physical contact with a game official. Under no circumstance is a player allowed to shove, push, or strike an official in an offensive, disrespectful, or unsportsmanlike manner. The player shall be disqualified from the game, and any such action must be reported to the Commissioner, who may impose further discipline.



**Note:** Violations of (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e) will be penalized if they occur anywhere in the stadium in which the officials have jurisdiction.

- (f) Prolonged or excessive celebrations or demonstrations by an individual player or multiple players.
- (g) Using any object as a prop, or possessing any foreign or extraneous object(s) that are not part of the uniform on the field or the sideline during the game, other than the football after a scoring play or change of possession. If any foreign object(s) are deemed a safety hazard by the game officials, in addition to a yardage penalty, the player will be subject to ejection from the game, whether he uses the object or not.

**Note:** Violations of (f) and (g) will be penalized if they occur anywhere on the field other than the bench area.

- (h) Removal of his helmet by a player in the field of play or the end zone during a celebration or demonstration, or during a confrontation with a game official or any other player.

**Penalty: For unsportsmanlike conduct (a) through (h): Loss of 15 yards from the succeeding spot or whatever spot the Referee, after consulting with the crew, deems equitable. If the foul is by the defense, it is also an automatic first down. If the action is flagrant and a game official sees the entire action, the player is also disqualified. See 19-2 for authority of Officiating department to instruct officiating crew to disqualify a player. Two violations of (a), (b), or (c) by the same player which occur before or during the game will result in disqualification in addition to the yardage penalty. Any violations at the game site on the day of the game, including postgame, may result in discipline by the Commissioner.**

- (i) Using acts or words by the defensive team that are designed to disconcert an offensive team at the snap. An official must blow his whistle immediately to stop play.
- (j) Concealing the ball underneath the uniform or using any article of equipment to simulate a ball.
- (k) Using entering substitutes, legally returning players, substitutes on sidelines, or withdrawn players to confuse opponents, including lingering by players leaving the field after being replaced by a substitute. See 5-2.
- (l) An offensive player lining up or going in motion less than five yards from the sideline in front of his team's designated bench area. However, an offensive player is permitted to line up less than five yards from the sidelines on the same side as his team's player bench, provided he is not in front of the designated bench area.
- (m) Conserving time after the two-minute warning of either half by repeatedly violating the substitution rule while the ball is dead and time is in. See 4-7-2.
- (n) Two successive delay-of-game penalties during the same down when time is in.
- (o) Jumping or standing on a teammate or opponent to block or attempt to block an opponent's kick or apparent kick.
- (p) Placing a hand or hands on a teammate or opponent to gain additional height to: (1) block or attempt to block an opponent's kick or apparent kick; or (2) attempt to jump through any gap between offensive players to block an opponent's kick or apparent kick.
- (q) Picking up a teammate to block or attempt to block an opponent's kick or apparent kick.
- (r) Running forward and leaping across the line of scrimmage in an obvious attempt to block a field goal or Try Kick, or apparent kick, unless the leaping player was in a stationary position within one yard of the line of scrimmage when the ball was snapped. A player who is more than one yard behind the line of scrimmage before or at the snap, may run forward and leap, provided he does not cross the line of scrimmage or land on players.
- (s) Goaltending by a defensive player leaping up to deflect a kick as it passes above the crossbar of a goalpost. The referee may award three points for a palpably unfair act (12-3-4).
- (t) A punter, placekicker, or holder who simulates being roughed or run into by a defensive player.
- (u) If a member of the kicking team is forced out of bounds, or goes out of bounds voluntarily, and does not attempt to return inbounds in a reasonable amount of time.
- (v) Attempting to call an excess or illegal timeout to "freeze" a kicker prior to a field goal attempt or a Try kick when:
  - (1) a team has already been charged a timeout during the same dead ball period; or
  - (2) a team has exhausted its three charged team timeouts that are permitted in a half.

If an attempt is made to call a timeout in these situations, the officials shall not grant a timeout, play will continue, and a penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be enforced after the down has been completed. The penalty shall be enforced as a dead ball foul if a timeout is inadvertently granted.

**Penalty: For unsportsmanlike conduct (i) through (v): Loss of 15 yards from:**

- (a) the succeeding spot if the ball is dead; or**
- (b) the previous spot if the ball was in play.**

If the infraction is flagrant, the player is also disqualified. If the foul is by the defense, it is also an automatic first down.

**ARTICLE 2. FOULS TO PREVENT SCORE.** The defense shall not commit successive or repeated fouls to prevent a score.

**Penalty: For successive or repeated fouls to prevent a score: If the violation is repeated after a warning, the score involved is awarded to the offensive team.**

**ARTICLE 3. INTENTIONAL FOULS TO MANIPULATE GAME CLOCK.** A team may not commit multiple fouls during the same down in an attempt to manipulate the game clock.

**Penalty: For multiple fouls to run off time from the game clock: Loss of 15 yards, and the game clock will be reset to where it was at the snap. After the penalty is enforced, the game clock will start on the next snap.**

**ARTICLE 4. PALPABLY UNFAIR ACT.** A player or substitute shall not interfere with play by any act which is palpably unfair.



**Penalty:** For a palpably unfair act: Offender may be disqualified. The Referee, after consulting the officiating crew, enforces any such distance penalty as they consider equitable and irrespective of any other specified code penalty. The Referee may award a score. See 19-1-3.

#### **SECTION 4 AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATION**

**ARTICLE 1. MULTIPLE UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT FOULS.** In addition to any penalty referenced elsewhere in the Official Playing Rules, a player or non-player personnel will be automatically disqualified if that person is penalized twice in the same game for committing one of the unsportsmanlike conduct fouls listed below, or a combination of the fouls listed below:

- (a) Throwing a punch, or a forearm, or kicking at an opponent, even though no contact is made.
- (b) Using abusive, threatening, or insulting language or gestures to opponents, teammates, officials, or representatives of the League.
- (c) Using baiting or taunting acts or words that may engender ill will between teams.

The player or non-player personnel will be automatically disqualified regardless of whether the penalty is accepted or declined by the opponent. The fouls do not have to be judged by the official to be flagrant for the automatic disqualification to occur, and any foul that occurs during the pregame warm-up period will carry over into the game. Nothing in this section supersedes the Game Official's discretion to judge a foul to be flagrant and disqualify the player based on one occurrence.

#### **SECTION 5 ILLEGAL BATS AND KICKS**

**ARTICLE 1. ILLEGAL BAT.** It is an illegal bat if:

- (a) any player bats or punches a loose ball in the field of play toward his opponent's goal line;
- (b) any player bats or punches a loose ball (that has touched the ground) in any direction, if it is in either end zone;
- (c) an offensive player bats a backward pass in flight toward his opponent's goal line; or
- (d) a forward pass that is controlled by a player prior to completing the catch is thrown forward (the ball remains alive if caught by a teammate or intercepted).

**Exception:** A forward pass in flight may be tipped, batted, or deflected in any direction by any eligible player at any time.

**ARTICLE 2. ILLEGALLY KICKING BALL.** No player may deliberately kick a loose ball or a ball that is in a player's possession. The ball is not dead when an illegally kicked ball is recovered, unless another rule prescribes otherwise.

**Penalty: For illegal batting or kicking the ball: Loss of 10 yards. If the foul is by Team A before possession changes during a scrimmage down: Loss of down and loss of 10 yards except for a foul by Team A beyond the line of scrimmage during a scrimmage kick, in which case there is no loss of down.**

**ARTICLE 3. BALL BATTED OR ILLEGALLY KICKED INTO OPPONENT.** A player is deemed to have not touched the ball if it is legally or illegally batted or illegally kicked into him by an opponent. Such touching is disregarded, although the bat or kick could create a first touching violation or a foul for an illegal bat or illegal kick.

## RULE 13 NON-PLAYER CONDUCT

### SECTION 1 NON-PLAYER CONDUCT

**ARTICLE 1. NON-PLAYER FOULS.** There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct by a substitute, coach, attendant, or any other non-player (entitled to sit on a team's bench) during any period or timeout (including between halves).

**Notes:**

- (1) *"Loud speaker" coaching from the sidelines is not permissible.*
- (2) *A player may communicate with a coach provided the coach is in his prescribed area during dead ball periods.*
- (3) *It is impermissible for the grounds crew or other team personnel to clear away snow for a Try kick, field goal, punt, or kickoff.*

**ARTICLE 2. TEAM ATTENDANTS MAY ENTER FIELD DURING TIMEOUT.** Either or both team attendants and their helpers may enter the field to attend to their team during a team timeout by either team. No other non-player may come on the field without the Referee's permission, unless he is an incoming substitute (5-2-2).

During any team timeout, all playing rules continue in force. Representatives of either team are prohibited from entering the field unless they are incoming substitutes, or team attendants or trainers entering to provide for the welfare of a player, and any game-type activities are prohibited on the field. The head coach may enter the field to check on the welfare of a player who is injured, but no assistant coach may enter the field.

**ARTICLE 3. BENCH CREDENTIALS.** With the exception of uniformed players eligible to participate in the game, all persons in a team's bench area must wear a visible credential clearly marked "BENCH." For all NFL games—pre-season, regular season, and postseason the home club will be issued a maximum of 27 credentials and the visiting club will be issued a maximum of 25 credentials for use in its bench area. Such credentials must be worn by coaches, players under contract to the applicable club but ineligible to participate in the game, and team support personnel (trainers, doctors, equipment men). From time to time, persons with game services credentials (e.g., oxygen technicians, ball crew) and authorized club personnel not regularly assigned to the bench area may be in a team's bench area for a brief period without bench credentials. Clubs are prohibited from allowing into their bench areas any persons who are not officially affiliated with the club or otherwise serving a necessary game day function.

**ARTICLE 4. RESTRICTED AREAS.** All team personnel must observe the zone restrictions applicable to the bench area and the border rimming the playing field. The only persons permitted within the solid six-foot white border (1-1-2) while play is in progress on the field are game officials. For reasons involving the safety of participating players whose actions may carry them out of bounds, officials' unobstructed coverage of the game, and spectators' sightlines to the field, the border rules must be observed by all coaches and players in the bench area. Violators are subject to penalty by the officials.

**ARTICLE 5. MOVEMENT ON SIDELINES.** Coaches and other non-participating team personnel (including uniformed players not in the game at the time) are prohibited from moving laterally along the sidelines any further than the points that are 18 yards from the middle of the bench area (i.e., 25-yard lines to left and right of bench areas when benches are placed on opposite sides of the field). A head coach may move laterally down the sideline outside the bench area to call a team timeout or challenge an on-field ruling when the ball is positioned outside the bench area. Lateral movement within the bench area must be behind the solid six-foot white border.

**ARTICLE 6. NON-BENCH AREAS.** Clubs are prohibited from allowing into the non-bench areas of field level any persons who have not been accredited to those locations by the home club's public relations office for purposes related to news media coverage, stadium operations, or pregame and halftime entertainment. The home club is responsible for keeping the field level cleared of all unauthorized persons. Photographers and other personnel accredited for field-level work must not be permitted in the end zones or any other part of the official playing field while play is in progress.

**Penalty: For unsportsmanlike conduct (illegal acts under Articles 1 through 6 above): Loss of 15 yards from team for whose supposed benefit foul was made.**

**Enforcement is from:**

- (a) the succeeding spot if the ball is dead; or
- (b) whatever spot the Referee, after consulting with the crew, deems equitable, if the ball was in play.

For a flagrant violation, the Referee may exclude the offender(s) from the playing field enclosure for the remainder of the game.

**ARTICLE 7. PALPABLY UNFAIR ACT (NON-PLAYER).** A non-player shall not commit any act which is palpably unfair.

**Penalty: For unsportsmanlike conduct (a palpably unfair act, see 12-3-4). The Referee, after consulting with the crew, shall make such ruling as he/she considers equitable (19-1-3).**

**ARTICLE 8. NON-PLAYER PERSONNEL.** Non-player personnel of a club (e.g., management personnel, coaches, trainers, equipment personnel) are prohibited from making unnecessary physical contact with or directing abusive, threatening, or insulting language or gestures at opponents, game officials, or representatives of the League. Violations before or during the game may also result in disqualification. Any violations at the game site on the day of the game, including postgame, may result in discipline by the Commissioner.

**Penalty: For unsportsmanlike conduct: Loss of 15 yards. Enforcement is from:**

- (a) the succeeding spot if the ball is dead;
- (b) the previous spot if the ball was in play; or
- (c) whatever spot the Referee, after consulting with the crew, deems equitable. (palpably unfair act).

## **RULE 14     PENALTY ENFORCEMENT**

**(Governing all cases not otherwise specifically provided for)**

### **SECTION 1     GENERAL RULES**

**ARTICLE 1. REFUSAL OF PENALTIES.** Unless expressly prohibited, the penalty for any foul may be declined by the offended team and play proceeds as though no foul had been committed. The yardage distance for any penalty may be declined, even though the penalty is accepted. In all situations, a disqualified or suspended player must be removed, regardless of the number of fouls or their enforcement, including if the penalty is declined.

**ARTICLE 2. NUMBER OF DOWN AFTER PENALTY.**

**Item 1. Foul by Team A.** If the ball is behind the line to gain after the enforcement of a distance penalty for a foul by Team A that occurs prior to (between downs) or during a play from scrimmage, the number of the ensuing down remains the same, unless it is a combination penalty involving loss of down (see Item 2).

**Item 2. Combination Penalty.** A combination penalty involving both distance and loss of down is enforced for the following fouls:

- (a) Illegal forward pass from behind or beyond the line (8-1-2)
- (b) Intentional grounding (8-2-1)
- (c) Backward pass that conserves time (8-7-2)
- (d) Illegally handing the ball forward (8-7-4)
- (e) Illegal punt, drop kick, or place kick (9-1-1)
- (f) Illegal batting of the ball (12-5-1)
- (g) Illegal kicking of the ball (12-5-2)

If a loss-of-down penalty is enforced prior to fourth down, the number of the ensuing down is one greater than that of the previous down. If it is enforced on fourth down, the ball is awarded to Team B; if there is a combination penalty on fourth down, the distance penalty is also enforced.

**Item 3. Line to Gain and Change of Possession.** If a change (or multiple changes) of possession is negated by enforcement of a penalty against Team A during a play from scrimmage, the line to gain for Team A remains the same.

**Item 4. Ball in Advance of Line to Gain.** If the ball is in advance of the line to gain after the enforcement of a distance penalty for a foul by Team A during a play from scrimmage, it is first-and-10 for Team A. It is also first-and-10 after enforcement for a dead ball foul (Section 4, Article 9) by Team A at the end of a play from scrimmage when there has not been a change of possession.

**Exception:** A foul against an official, a team initiating a challenge when it has exhausted its timeouts, and a fifth and subsequent excess timeout for injury, regardless of when they occur, are always treated as a foul between downs.

**Item 5. Foul by Team B.** After a penalty for a foul by Team B prior to, during, or after a play from scrimmage, the ensuing down is first-and-10 for Team A.

**Exceptions:**

- (1) Offside
- (2) Encroachment
- (3) Neutral zone infraction
- (4) Delay of game
- (5) Illegal substitution
- (6) Excess time out
- (7) Running into the kicker
- (8) More than 11 players on the field at the snap
- (9) More than 11 players in the formation prior to the snap
- (10) Illegal formation by the defense during a scrimmage kick play

For the above exceptions, the number of the down and the line to gain remain the same unless a distance penalty places the ball on or in advance of the line to gain, in which case it is first-and-10 for Team A.

**Item 6. Foul After Change of Possession.** If there is a foul, including a dead ball foul, after team possession has changed during a down, following enforcement of a distance penalty, it is first-and-10 for the team that was in possession at the time of the foul.

**Item 7. Foul Between Downs.** If there is a foul between downs, the down remains the same, unless enforcement of the foul results in a first down.

**Item 8. Double Fouls.** If there is a double foul during the down, and the fouls offset, the down is replayed, and the number of the down remains the same.

**ARTICLE 3. CHOICE OF PENALTIES (MULTIPLE FOULS).** If there is a multiple foul (3-13-1-d) during the down, only one penalty may be enforced after the Referee has explained the alternatives to the offended team.

**Exceptions:**

- (1) A foul against an official, a team initiating a challenge when it has exhausted its timeouts, and a fifth and subsequent excess timeout for injury are not part of a multiple foul and will be enforced in addition to any other foul.
- (2) If there is a personal foul that is also defensive pass interference, both fouls may be enforced.

## SECTION 2 SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT FOR PENALTIES

**ARTICLE 1. HALF-DISTANCE PENALTY.** If the enforcement of a distance penalty would move the ball more than half the distance from the spot of enforcement to the offender's goal line, the penalty shall be half the distance from the spot of enforcement to its goal line. This general rule supersedes any other general or specific enforcement of a distance penalty.

**Exceptions:**

- (1) See Rule 8-2-1 for enforcement for intentional grounding.
- (2) See Rule 12-3-4 for enforcement for a palpably unfair act.

**ARTICLE 2. FOUL BEHIND A GOAL LINE.**

- (a) When the spot of enforcement for a foul by the defense is behind the offensive goal line, a distance penalty is enforced from the goal line. However, if the play results in a touchback, the penalty is enforced from the 20-yard line, or from the **30-yard line or 20-yard line (as applicable by Rule 6-1-5)** if the impetus was from a free kick. See Section 4, Article 6 for fouls during a backward pass or fumble and Section 4, Article 4 (b), Note, for exception when a player's momentum carries him into the end zone.
- (b) When the spot of enforcement for a foul by the offense is behind the offensive goal line, it is a safety if the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot.
- (c) When the spot of enforcement for a foul by the offense is behind the defensive goal line, a distance penalty is enforced from the goal line.

**ARTICLE 3. FOUL DURING A SCORE.** If a team commits a personal or unsportsmanlike conduct foul, or a palpably unfair act, during a down in which the opponent scores **a field goal or safety**, the penalty is enforced on the succeeding free kick (unless the score resulted from the enforcement). On a touchdown, the penalty, whether a live ball or dead ball foul or a foul between downs, is enforced on the Try. On a successful Try kick, any foul by Team B that does not result in a re-Try or negate a score may be enforced on the succeeding free kick. In all scoring situations, the offended team also has the option of accepting the penalty with customary enforcement and beginning a new series, or replaying the down, instead of counting the points.

**ARTICLE 4. PERSONAL FOULS AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT FOULS.** If any team commits a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul that is not part of a double foul, and the opponent has possession at the end of the down, enforcement may be from the dead ball spot in addition to any other enforcement options provided by rule.

## SECTION 3 SPOT FROM WHICH PENALTY IS ENFORCED

**ARTICLE 1. GOVERNING PROVISIONS.** The general provisions of Rule 14 govern all spots of enforcement, except for specific enforcements designated elsewhere in these rules.

**ARTICLE 2. FOUL BY NON-PLAYER.** Penalties for fouls committed by non-players shall be enforced as provided for in Rule 13.

**ARTICLE 3. ENFORCEMENT SPOT NOT GOVERNED.** When the spot of enforcement is not governed by a general or specific rule, it is the spot of the foul.

**ARTICLE 4. SPOTS OF ENFORCEMENT.** The spot of enforcement is the spot at which a penalty is enforced. The spots of enforcement are as follows:

- (a) The previous spot: The spot at which the ball was last put in play.
- (b) The spot of the foul: The spot at which a foul was committed or, by rule, is considered to have been committed.
- (c) The spot of a backward pass or a fumble: The spot at which the backward pass or fumble occurred during the down in which there was a foul.
- (d) The dead ball spot: The spot at which the ball became dead.
- (e) The succeeding spot: The spot at which the ball will next be put in play (i.e., the spot of the ball after enforcement for a foul, or, if there has been no foul, the spot at which the ball became dead).
- (f) The other Try spot: The yard line of the other Try option, as determined by any previously enforced penalties, if applicable.
- (g) The spot of a change of possession: The spot at which possession is gained by or awarded to the opponent.

**ARTICLE 5. BASIC SPOT.** The basic spot is a reference point that is used to determine the spot of enforcement for fouls committed pursuant to the Three-and-One Method of Enforcement. It is applicable for fouls committed during (i) a running play or (ii) a backward pass or fumble.

- (a) For fouls committed during a running play which is not followed by a change of possession, the basic spot is the dead ball spot.
- (b) For fouls committed during a running play which is followed by a change of possession, the basic spot is the spot where possession is lost.
- (c) For fouls committed during a backward pass or fumble, the basic spot is the spot of the backward pass or the spot of the fumble.

**ARTICLE 6. THREE-AND-ONE METHOD OF ENFORCEMENT.** For fouls committed during a run, a backward pass, or a fumble, the penalty is enforced from the basic spot if:

- (a) the defense fouls in advance of the basic spot;
- (b) the defense fouls behind the basic spot; or
- (c) the offense fouls in advance of the basic spot.

If the offense fouls behind the basic spot, enforcement is from the spot of the foul (three-and-one method of enforcement).

**Exceptions for fouls committed by the offense:**

- (1) Fouls committed by the offense behind the line of scrimmage are enforced from the previous spot.

- (2) If the offense commits a foul behind its own goal line, it is a safety if the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot. See Rule 8-2-1 for enforcement for intentional grounding.
- (3) If the offense commits a foul beyond the line of scrimmage and the basic spot is behind the line of scrimmage, enforcement is from the previous spot. If the dead ball spot is in the offensive end zone, it is a safety, regardless of where the foul occurs.
- (4) If the offense commits a foul in the defense's end zone prior to scoring a touchdown, enforcement is from the goal line.

**Exception for fouls committed by the defense:**

- (1) When the basic spot is behind the line of scrimmage, and the defense has committed a foul either behind or beyond the line of scrimmage, the penalty is enforced from the previous spot.

**SECTION 4 SPOTS OF ENFORCEMENT**

**ARTICLE 1. FOUL BEFORE OR AT THE SNAP.**

**Item 1. Before the Snap.** A foul that occurs prior to the snap is enforced from the succeeding spot, and the down remains the same, unless enforcement of the foul results in a first down.

**Item 2. At the Snap.** A foul that occurs at the snap is enforced from the previous spot, and the down is repeated, unless enforcement of the foul results in a first down.

**ARTICLE 2. FOUL COMMITTED DURING RUNNING PLAY.** For a foul committed during a running play when there is not a subsequent change of possession during the down, the basic spot is the dead ball spot. The three-and-one method of enforcement is used (see Section 3, Article 6).

*Note: A foul during a run prior to a forward pass or kick from behind the line is enforced as a foul during a passing play or during a scrimmage kick.*

**ARTICLE 3. FOUL COMMITTED DURING RUNNING PLAY BEFORE CHANGE OF POSSESSION.** When a foul occurs during a running play, and the run in which the foul occurs is followed by a change of possession, the basic spot is the spot where possession is lost. The three-and-one method of enforcement is used (see Section 3, Article 6).

- (a) If the foul is by the defensive team, the ball reverts to the offensive team prior to enforcement of the foul.
- (b) If the foul is by the offensive team, the defense must decline the penalty to retain possession. However, if the foul by the offense was a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul, the defense retains possession, and enforcement is from the dead ball spot. If the defense subsequently loses possession, the penalty is enforced from the spot where possession changed, and the defense retains possession.
- (c) If there are multiple fouls by the defense, the enforcement shall be that which is most beneficial to the offense.

**ARTICLE 4. FOUL COMMITTED AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION (END ZONE ENFORCEMENT).** If there is a foul by either team after a change of possession, and the dead ball spot is in Team B's end zone, enforcement shall be as follows:

- (a) Fouls by Team A:
  - (1) If the impetus was provided by Team B, enforcement is from the goal line. See Note below for exception when a player's momentum carries him into the end zone.
  - (2) If the impetus was provided by Team A, enforcement is from the 20-yard line, or from the 30-yard line or 20-yard line (as applicable by Rule 6-1-5) if the impetus was from a free kick.
- (b) Fouls by Team B (Team A impetus):
  - (1) If Team B attempts to advance the ball, and the spot of its foul is in the end zone, the result is a safety.
  - (2) If Team B does not attempt to advance the ball, and its foul occurs in the end zone, enforcement is from the 20-yard line, or from the 30-yard line or 20-yard line (as applicable by Rule 6-1-5) if the impetus was from a free kick.
  - (3) If the spot of its foul is in the field of play, the penalty is enforced from either the spot of the foul or the touchback spot (20 or 30), whichever is least beneficial to Team B, regardless of whether Team B attempts to advance the ball.

*Note: If a Team B player's original momentum carries him into his end zone, where the ball is declared dead in his team's possession, the dead ball spot is considered to be the spot at which the player established possession. See 11-5-1-Exc. 2.*

- (c) Fouls by Team B (Team B impetus):
  - (1) Regardless of whether the foul is in the field of play or in the end zone, the result is a safety.

**ARTICLE 5. FOUL COMMITTED DURING PASSING PLAY.** If there is a foul by either team from the time of the snap until a forward pass thrown from behind the line ends, the penalty is enforced from the previous spot. A pass play ends and a running play begins at the instant that a pass is caught.

**Exceptions:**

- (a) Intentional grounding is a loss of down at the spot of the foul, or a loss of down and a 10-yard penalty from the previous spot, whichever is less beneficial for the offense. If the foul occurs less than 10 yards behind the line of scrimmage, but more than half the distance to the goal line, the ball shall be placed at the spot of the pass. (If the pass is thrown from the end zone, it is a safety).
- (b) Pass interference by the defense is enforced at the spot of the foul. If it occurs in the fouling team's end zone, the ball will be placed at the one-yard line, or half the distance to the goal line from the previous spot, whichever is more beneficial to the offense.
- (c) It is a safety when the offensive team commits a foul behind its own goal line if the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot.
- (d) If there is a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by the defense prior to the completion of a forward pass thrown from behind the line, enforcement is from the previous spot or the dead ball spot, whichever is more beneficial to the



offense. If the play results in a score for the offense, enforcement is on the Try. If the passing team is fouled and subsequently loses possession after a completion, the passing team retains possession of the ball, and enforcement is from the previous spot.

- (e) If there is a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by the offense prior to the offense losing possession during a pass play or a subsequent running play, enforcement is from the dead ball spot. However, if the defense subsequently loses possession, the penalty is enforced from the spot of the defense's catch or recovery, and the defense retains possession. This also applies to a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by the offense prior to a forward pass thrown from behind the line when the offense fails to make the line to gain.

**Notes:**

- (1) *The penalty for a forward pass from behind the line after the ball has been beyond the line, or for a second forward pass from behind the line, is enforced from the previous spot, unless the spot of the pass is behind the passer's goal line, in which case it is a safety if the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot.*
- (2) *If a forward pass is thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage, or when there is no line of scrimmage, it is a foul during a running play.*

**ARTICLE 6. FOUL DURING A BACKWARD PASS OR FUMBLE.** If there is a foul by either team during a backward pass or fumble, the basic spot is the spot of the backward pass or fumble. The three-and-one method of enforcement is used (see Section 3, Article 6).

- (a) When the spot of the backward pass or fumble is beyond the line of scrimmage, or when there is not a line of scrimmage, and there is a foul during the backward pass or fumble, the basic spot is the spot of the backward pass or the spot of the fumble. The three-and-one method of enforcement is used. See 14-3-6.
- (b) When the spot of a backward pass or fumble is behind the line of scrimmage, all fouls committed by either team, including a foul by Team B in Team A's end zone, are enforced from the previous spot, except a foul by the offense in its end zone is a safety if the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot.
- (c) If there is a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by the offense during a fumble or backward pass that is recovered by the defense, enforcement is from the dead ball spot. If the recovering team subsequently loses possession, the penalty is enforced from the spot of its recovery, and it retains possession. This also applies to a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by the offense during a fumble or backward pass that is recovered by the offense, and the offense fails to make the line to gain.

**Notes:**

- (1) *If Team B gains possession in its end zone, and the impetus was provided by Team A, if Team B fumbles or throws a backward pass in the end zone and fouls while the ball is loose, the spot of the fumble or the backward pass is considered to be the B20-yard line, or the **B30-yard line or B20-yard line (as applicable)** if the impetus was from a free kick.*
- (2) *If a Team B player's original momentum carries him into his end zone, where he fumbles the ball, the spot of the fumble is considered to be the spot at which the player established possession. See 11-5-1-Exc. 2.*

**ARTICLE 7. FOUL DURING FREE KICK PLAY.** If there is a foul during a free kick, enforcement is from the previous spot, and the free kick is made again. However, if the kicking team commits a foul prior to the end of the kick, and the receiving team retains possession throughout the down, it will have the option of enforcing the penalty at the previous spot and replaying the down or adding the penalty yardage to the dead ball spot. **The dead ball spot for free kicks that result in a touchback is the 20-yard line or 30-yard line. (See Rule 6, Section 1, Article 5).**

**Exceptions:**

- (a) A foul for an illegal double team block, or an illegal wedge during the free kick, is enforced from the spot of the foul, or the previous spot if the foul occurs in Team B's end zone.
- (b) For a free kick out of bounds **or not reaching the landing zone**, see 6-2-4.
- (c) For a free kick illegally touched, see 6-2-5.

**Note:** *In (a) above, if the foul is not part of a double foul and the opponent has possession at the end of the down, the foul may be enforced from the dead ball spot. See 14-2-4.*

A free kick ends when Team B establishes possession. Fouls by Team A prior to the time that Team B establishes possession are offensive fouls. If Team A legally recovers a free kick, there is no change of possession. After Team B establishes possession, a running play begins, and fouls that occur thereafter are enforced from the dead ball spot or the spot of the foul (three-and-one method).

**ARTICLE 8. FOUL DURING SCRIMMAGE KICK PLAY.** If there is a foul from the time of the snap until a legal scrimmage kick ends, enforcement is from the previous spot. This includes a foul during a run prior to a legal kick, and a foul by the kicking team during a missed field goal attempt.

**Exceptions:**

- (1) If the offensive team commits a foul in its own end zone, it is a safety if the defense elects to enforce the penalty at that spot.
- (2) If there is a foul by the kicking team, and the receiving team retains possession throughout the down, the receiving team will have the option of taking the penalty at the previous spot and replaying the down, or adding the penalty yardage on to the dead ball spot.

**Notes:**

- (a) *The dead ball spot for scrimmage kicks that result in a touchback is the 20-yard line (see 11-4-2-b for a missed field goal from beyond the 20-yard line).*



- (b) *If there is a foul for an illegal touch inside the five-yard line, the receiving team also has the option of accepting a touchback.*
- (c) *If there is a foul by the kicking team during a missed field goal attempt where the receiving team is awarded the ball (see 11-4-2), enforcement is from the succeeding spot.*
- (3) Penalties for fair catch interference, interference with the opportunity to make a catch, an invalid fair catch signal, or a personal foul (blocking) after a fair catch signal are enforced from the spot of the foul. If the personal foul is not part of a double foul and the opponent has possession at the end of the down, it may be enforced from the dead ball spot. See 14-2-4.
- (4) Except for fouls that are committed in an attempt to block the kick (such as running into or roughing the kicker, defensive holding (pull-and-shoot), leverage, leaping, and pushing teammate(s) into the offensive formation), if the receiving team commits a foul **during a scrimmage kick play** that crosses the line of scrimmage, the penalty for its infraction will be enforced as if it had been in possession of the ball at the time the foul occurred (a post-possession foul), provided that the receiving team does not lose possession of the ball at any time during the down. The penalty shall be enforced from whichever of the following spots is least beneficial to the receiving team:
  - (a) the end of the kick; or
  - (b) the spot of the foul.

If the foul occurs in the end zone, it is deemed to have occurred at the 20-yard line, unless enforcement results in a safety (14-4-4).
- (5) For enforcement of a personal or unsportsmanlike conduct foul on a play that results in a score, see 14-2-3; for an illegal bat, see 12-5-1; and for illegally kicking a loose ball, see 12-5-2.

When Team B establishes possession of the ball, a scrimmage kick ends, and a running play begins, and fouls that occur thereafter are enforced from the dead ball spot or the spot of the foul (three-and-one method, 14-3-6).

**ARTICLE 9. DEAD BALL FOUL AND FOUL BETWEEN DOWNS.** A dead ball foul is a foul that occurs in the continuing action after a down ends, or a taunting foul that occurs at any time. If the foul occurs simultaneously with the ball becoming dead, it is considered a dead ball foul. The penalty for a dead ball foul is enforced from the succeeding spot, and the down counts.

A foul between downs is a foul that occurs after the end of the down and after any continuing action resulting from the down, but prior to the next snap or free kick. The penalty for a foul between downs is enforced from the succeeding spot, and the down counts, but it cannot be combined with a live ball foul or a dead ball foul to create a multiple or double foul. A foul between downs is always enforced separately from any other foul. A foul against an official, regardless of when it occurs, is always treated as a foul between downs. See 12-3-1-e-pen.

**Exception:** If there is a personal, unsportsmanlike conduct, or taunting foul by either team following the end of the second or fourth periods, the penalty yardage will be enforced on the second-half kickoff or the kickoff in overtime, unless it is part of a double foul (See Section 5).

**Item 1. Dead Ball Foul by Team A.** If there is a dead ball foul by Team A after a down in which Team A has made a first down, after enforcement of the penalty it will be first-and-10 for Team A. If there is a foul between downs after a down in which Team A has made a first down, after enforcement of the penalty it will be first-and-25 for Team A.

**Item 2. Dead Ball Fouls by Both Teams.** Dead ball fouls by both teams are offset at the succeeding spot, and the down counts, but any disqualified player or players must be removed pursuant to Rule 5, Section 2, Article 7.

**Item 3. Live Ball and Dead Ball Fouls.** Live ball fouls and dead ball fouls combine to create double fouls or multiple fouls, and all customary rules for enforcement apply.

**Exceptions:**

- (1) If there is a 5-yard vs. 15-yard double foul on the last play of a half, and the 15-yard penalty is for a dead ball foul (personal, unsportsmanlike conduct, or taunting) by either team, the penalty yardage will be enforced on the second half kickoff or the kickoff to start overtime. There will be no extension of the period.
- (2) If the scoring team commits a dead ball foul after a score, and its opponent's live ball foul is not for a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct, the opponent's foul is disregarded, the score counts, and the offensive team's dead ball foul is enforced on the Try **or succeeding free kick if there is no Try**. If the opponent's foul is a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct, the score counts, and the fouls offset **after the play**.
- (3) If the only foul by the defense is a dead ball foul on the last play of the half ("clean hands end of half"). If the foul by the offense is not a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct, it is disregarded, and the dead ball personal foul or dead ball unsportsmanlike conduct foul by the defense will be enforced on the second half kickoff or to start overtime. If both teams' fouls are for a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct, those fouls offset at the end of the down.

**SECTION 5 FOULS BY BOTH TEAMS (DOUBLE FOULS)**

**ARTICLE 1. DOUBLE FOUL WITHOUT CHANGE OF POSSESSION.** If there is a double foul (3-13-1-e) during a down in which there is not a change of possession, the penalties are offset, and the down is replayed at the previous spot. If it is a scrimmage down, the number of the next down and the line to gain is the same as for the down in which the fouls occurred. Penalties for double fouls cannot be declined by either team.

**Exceptions:**

- (1) If one or more fouls by one team includes a 15-yard penalty, and the penalty for the foul or fouls committed by the other team is for a five-yard penalty without an automatic first down, a loss of down, or a 10-second runoff (15 yards versus five yards), or that is not a spot foul, the 15-yard penalty is enforced from the previous spot, and the five-yard penalty is

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- (2) disregarded. Five vs. 15 enforcement cannot be declined by the team that committed the minor foul, except as described in (2) below. See 4-8-2-h and 14-4-9-Item 3-Exc. 1 for dead ball fouls at the end of a half.
- (3) If one of the fouls is a dead ball foul for delay of game for spiking the ball and the opponent's foul is a live ball foul, the team that committed the delay of game foul, in addition to Article 1 above, will have the option to decline the foul committed by its opponent and be assessed the penalty for delay from the dead ball spot.
- (4) If both fouls are dead ball fouls or are treated as such (14-4-9), the penalties are offset, and the ball is next put in play at the succeeding spot, unless the dead ball fouls occur after the ball has been made ready for play, in which case 5 vs. 15 enforcement applies.
- (5) 14-4-9-Item 3 exceptions for dead ball fouls at the end of a half or after a score.

**ARTICLE 2. DOUBLE FOUL WITH A CHANGE OF POSSESSION.** If there is a double foul during a down in which there is a change or changes of possession, including if one of the fouls is a post-possession foul by Team B during a scrimmage kick, the team last gaining possession will keep the ball after enforcement for its foul, provided it did not foul prior to last gaining possession ("clean hands").

**Exceptions:**

- (1) If Team A fouls during a free kick or scrimmage kick prior to the change of possession, Team B may elect to replay the down at the previous spot.
- (2) If a safety results from the enforcement of a foul by Team B, the down is replayed at the previous spot.
- (3) *If the offense's foul is for a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct before the change of possession, the penalties offset, and the team last in possession shall retain the ball at the spot where its foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. In this event, (1) and (2) above also apply.*
- (4) If both teams foul after the last change of possession (double foul after change of possession), the penalties are offset, and the team last in possession shall retain the ball at the spot where its foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. If the spot is normally a touchback, the ball is placed on the 20-yard line, *or the 30-yard line or 20-yard line (as applicable by Rule 6-1-5) if the impetus was from a free kick.* If it is normally a safety, the ball is placed on the one-yard line. On kicking plays, if Team A also fouled prior to the change of possession, Team B shall also have the option in (1) above.

If the team last in possession does not have "clean hands" when it establishes possession, the penalties offset, and the down is replayed at the previous spot.

## RULE 15 INSTANT REPLAY

### SECTION 1 INITIATING A REPLAY REVIEW

**ARTICLE 1. COACH CHALLENGES.** Each team is permitted a minimum of two challenges that will initiate Instant Replay reviews:

- (a) The head coach can initiate a challenge by throwing a red flag onto the field of play before the next legal snap or kick.
- (b) A team that commits a foul that prevents the next snap can no longer challenge the previous play. The non-fouling team can still challenge the previous play, and both teams can benefit from the review.
- (c) The head coach may challenge on-field rulings listed in Section 3, except for those plays that only the Replay Official can review (Article 2).
- (d) Each challenge requires an available team timeout. A team that is out of timeouts, or has used all its available challenges, may not attempt to initiate a challenge.

A team that initiates a challenge when the team is not permitted to challenge will be charged a team timeout.

**Penalty: For initiating a challenge when a team has exhausted its timeouts: Loss of 15 yards enforced as a foul between downs.**

- (e) If a challenge is unsuccessful, the team will be charged a timeout.
- (f) A team will be permitted a third challenge if it is successful on at least one of its challenges. A fourth challenge will not be permitted.

**ARTICLE 2. REPLAY OFFICIAL REQUEST FOR REVIEW.** Only the Replay Official or the Senior Vice President of Officiating or his or her designee may initiate a review of a play:

- (a) that begins after the two-minute warning of each half;
- (b) throughout any overtime period;
- (c) when points are scored by either team;
- (d) that is a Try attempt (successful or unsuccessful); and
- (e) when on-field officials rule:
  - (1) an interception by an opponent;
  - (2) a fumble or backward pass recovered by an opponent or that goes out of bounds through the opponent's end zone;
  - (3) that the offense failed to reach the line to gain on fourth down;
  - (4) possession by the kicking team at the end of any free kick or scrimmage kick down; or
  - (5) a disqualification of a player.

Such plays may be reviewed regardless of whether a foul is committed on the play that, if accepted, would negate the on-field ruling.

The Replay Official may only initiate a review of a play until the next legal snap or kick. The Replay Official may consult with a designated member of the Officiating department at the League office regarding whether to initiate a review.

### SECTION 2 REPLAY REVIEWS

All Replay Reviews will be conducted by the Senior Vice President of Officiating or his or her designee. Reviews are conducted in consultation with the Replay Official and the Referee, who will have access to a field-level video monitor. An expedited review can occur without consultation with the Referee.

**ARTICLE 1. CHANGING A RULING.** An on-field ruling will be changed only when the Senior Vice President of Officiating or his or her designee determines that clear and obvious video evidence warrants a change.

**ARTICLE 2. LENGTH OF REVIEW.** A decision must be made within 60 seconds from when video is shared with the Referee on the field. The video will not be shared with the Referee on the field when there is an expedited review.

**ARTICLE 3. SCOPE OF REVIEW.** Once a review is initiated, all reviewable aspects of a play (Section 3) may be examined and are subject to change, even if not the specific reason for the challenge.

**ARTICLE 4. AWARDED POSSESSION.** When the on-field ruling results in a dead ball (e.g., score, down by contact, incomplete pass, etc.), and following replay review it is determined that possession was lost before the ball should have been ruled dead, possession may be awarded to a player who clearly recovers a loose ball in the immediate continuing action. A loose ball that touches out of bounds is deemed a clear recovery by the player who last possessed the ball.

**Note:** If on-field officials make a preliminary ruling of which team recovered the ball, that preliminary ruling may constitute a clear recovery.

**ARTICLE 5. EACH RULING REVIEWED SEPARATELY.** Any aspect of a ruling that is not changed will be considered a correct ruling for purposes of reviewing the play.

### SECTION 3 REVIEWABLE RULINGS

**ARTICLE 1. PLAY SITUATIONS.** The Replay System will cover the following play situations:

- (a) Plays involving possession (see Section 3, Article 2).
- (b) Plays involving touching of either the ball or the ground (see Section 3, Article 3).
- (c) Plays governed by the goal line (see Section 3, Article 4).
- (d) Plays governed by the boundary lines (see Section 3, Article 5).

- (e) Plays governed by the line of scrimmage (see Section 3, Article 6).
- (f) Plays governed by the line to gain (see Section 3, Article 7).
- (g) Number of players on the field (see Section 3, Article 8).
- (h) Game administration (see Section 3, Article 9).
  - (1) Penalty enforcement.
  - (2) Proper down.
  - (3) Spot of a foul.
  - (4) Status of the game clock.
- (i) Disqualification of a player (see Section 3, Article 10).
- (j) Other reviewable plays (see Section 3, Article 11).

## ARTICLE 2. PLAYS INVOLVING POSSESSION.

**Item 1. Completion of a Pass.** Whether a pass was complete or incomplete.

**Notes:**

- (1) **Incomplete Changed to Catch.** *If a ruling of incomplete is changed to a catch, the ball will be placed at the spot where it was when the receiver's second foot or a body part touched the ground with control. No advance is awarded.*
- (2) **Incomplete Changed to Catch and Fumble.** *When a ruling of incomplete is changed to a catch and fumble, the ball will be awarded at the spot of recovery to the team that recovers the ball in the immediate continuing action. If there is no clear recovery, the ball will be awarded to the team last in possession at the spot where possession was lost.*

**Item 2. Recovery of a Loose Ball.** Whether a player legally recovered a loose ball in the field of play, at the sideline, goal line, or in the end zone.

**Item 3. Forward Pass or Fumble.** Whether a passer's hand started forward with control of the ball, or whether the ball was fumbled.

**Notes:**

- (1) *When an on-field ruling is incomplete, and the passer clearly fumbled the ball, the ball will be awarded at the spot of recovery to the team that recovers the ball in the immediate continuing action. If there is no clear recovery, the ball will be awarded to the team last in possession at the spot where possession was lost, except that if possession was lost in the team's own end zone, and the ball was not clearly recovered in the end zone, the ball will be placed at the one-yard line.*
- (2) *When a ruling of fumble is changed to an incomplete forward pass, a foul for intentional grounding can be created in replay only if a pre-review announcement was made that a changed ruling would create the foul.*
- (3) *This item applies to a ruling that a passer muffed a snap or spiked the ball to stop a running clock.*

**Item 4. Fumble.** Whether a runner lost possession before he was down by contact, or had given himself up.

**Notes:**

- (1) *When an on-field ruling is down by contact, and the runner clearly fumbled the ball, the ball will be awarded at the spot of recovery to the team that recovers the ball in the immediate continuing action. If there is no clear recovery, the ruling on the field stands.*
- (2) *The spot of a forward fumble out of bounds, or a fumble that occurs on fourth down, or after the two-minute warning, or during a Try, is reviewable regardless of whether on-field officials return the ball to the spot of the fumble, and regardless of whether it involves a score, potential score, a change of possession, or the line to gain.*

## ARTICLE 3. PLAYS INVOLVING TOUCHING OF EITHER THE BALL OR THE GROUND.

**Item 1. Down by Contact.** Whether a player **should have been ruled** down by contact while in possession of the ball.

**Item 2. Pass or Down by Contact.** Whether the ball was thrown before the passer was ruled down by contact.

**Note:** *When an on-field ruling is down by contact, and the passer clearly throws the ball before being down by contact, the ball will be awarded at the spot of the completion or interception. No advance is permitted. If the pass is incomplete, the down counts.*

**Item 3. Touching of a Forward Pass.** Whether a player touched a forward pass.

**Notes:**

- (1) *Only the fact of touching, and not intent, is reviewable.*
- (2) *A player touching a pass will remove a foul for offensive or defensive pass interference if the touching occurs away from and noticeably before the interference.*

**Item 4. Touching of a Kick.** Whether a player touched a kick and the spot of touching.

**Note:** *A foul for running into or roughing the kicker or holder can be removed if the kicked ball was touched before the contact. If a pre-review announcement was made that there was no foul because the ball was ruled to be touched, a foul for running into or roughing the kicker or holder can be created in replay if the ball was not touched before the contact.*

**Item 5. Touching of a Loose Ball.** Whether a player touched a loose ball.

**Item 6. Ball Touching the Ground on a Free Kick.** Whether a ball hit the ground after being kicked.

**Item 7. Ball Touching the Ground on a Scrimmage Kick.** Whether a ball touched the ground before being caught or recovered by a punter or holder.

#### **ARTICLE 4. PLAYS GOVERNED BY THE GOAL LINE.**

**Item 1. Ball breaking the plane of the goal line.** Whether any part of the ball broke the plane of the goal line while in player possession and before the ball should have been declared dead.

**Notes:**

- (1) *A ruling of a touchdown can be reviewed to determine if the runner fumbled before the ball broke the plane of the goal line. If there is no clear recovery in the immediate continuing action, the team that fumbled is awarded the ball at the spot of the fumble.*
- (2) *The dead ball spot is not reviewable to determine solely whether it should be closer to or further from the goal line.*

**Item 2. Momentum.** Whether a player's momentum spot was in the field of play or in the end zone (Rule 11-5-1-b, exc. 2). A ruling of whether a player's momentum caused him to enter his end zone is not reviewable.

**Note:** *For purposes of a replay review, the momentum spot is the spot where the second foot (or other body part other than the hands) touched the ground. If that spot is on the goal line or in the end zone, it is a touchback.*

#### **ARTICLE 5. PLAYS GOVERNED BY THE BOUNDARY LINES.**

**Item 1. Runner Inbounds.** *A ruling that a runner was inbounds is reviewable to determine whether the runner touched out of bounds.* A ruling that a runner was out of bounds is reviewable only to determine: (a) the spot of the ball in relation to the line to gain or the goal line at the spot where the runner was ruled to have touched out of bounds; (b) if the runner fumbled the ball before taking two additional steps beyond the spot where he was ruled out of bounds; or (c) if the ball broke the plane of the goal line in the runner's possession before taking two additional steps beyond the spot where he was ruled out of bounds.

**Item 2. Receiver Out of Bounds.** Whether a receiver touched out of bounds is reviewable to determine whether he was eligible to touch the ball and whether a defender could legally contact him.

**Item 3. Passer Out of Bounds Before Throwing Pass.** A ruling that a player stepped out of bounds before throwing a pass is reviewable to determine if he was inbounds when he threw the pass.

**Note:** *When an on-field ruling is out of bounds, and the passer clearly threw the ball before touching out of bounds, the ball will be awarded at the spot of completion or interception. No advance is permitted. If the pass is incomplete, the down counts.*

**Item 4. Player Out of Bounds on Scrimmage Kick.** Whether a player was out of bounds during a scrimmage kick is reviewable to determine the spot of the ball and whether the ball was illegally touched.

**Item 5. Loose Ball.** Whether a loose ball touched a boundary line, anything on the boundary line, a pylon, or an object.

**Note:** *Ball That Does Not Touch a Boundary Line. If an on-field ruling that a loose ball touched a boundary line is changed, possession can be awarded to a team that recovers the loose ball in the immediate continuing action.*

#### **ARTICLE 6. PLAYS GOVERNED BY THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.**

**Item 1. Illegal Passes.** Whether a forward pass was thrown when the passer was beyond the line of scrimmage, or after the ball had crossed the line of scrimmage and returned behind it. Rule 8-1-2, Item 1.

**Item 2. Illegal Kick.** Whether a scrimmage kick was from beyond the line of scrimmage, or a second kick was made after the ball had crossed the line of scrimmage. Rule 9-1-1.

**ARTICLE 7. PLAYS GOVERNED BY THE LINE TO GAIN.** The dead ball spot is reviewable to determine whether it was short of, at, or beyond the line to gain.

**Notes:**

- (1) *For purposes of a replay review, forward progress is determined when a player with control of the ball is contacted by an opponent and driven backwards.*
- (2) *A challenge is successful only if the ruling of whether a new series was awarded is changed, regardless of whether the ball was moved closer to the line to gain.*
- (3) *Following review, the ball will be placed at the correct dead ball spot, but the challenge will be successful only if the line to gain ruling is changed.*

**ARTICLE 8. NUMBER OF PLAYERS ON THE FIELD.** Whether a player is on the field at the snap or when officials rule a dead ball foul for too many players in formation. For a player to be off the field, he must touch the ground out of bounds. For a player to be on the field, both feet or a body part must touch the ground in the field of play.

**ARTICLE 9. GAME ADMINISTRATION AND CONSULTATION.** The Replay Official and designated members of the Officiating department may consult with on-field officials, or conduct a replay review, or advise the game officials on specific, objective aspects of a play when clear and obvious video evidence is present, and/or to address game administration issues, including, but not limited to:

- (a) penalty enforcement;
- (b) the proper down;
- (c) spot of a foul;



- (d) the game clock;
- (e) possession;
- (f) completed or intercepted pass;
- (g) touching of a loose ball, boundary line, goal line, or end line;
- (h) location of the football or a player in relation to a boundary line, the line of scrimmage, the line to gain, the goal line, or the pocket area;
- (i) down by contact (when a player is not ruled down by contact on the field);
- (j) if a foul is called for roughing the passer based only on a hit to the passer's head or neck area and there is clear and obvious video evidence that the defender did not make any contact with the passer's head or neck area;
- (k) if a foul is called for intentional grounding and there is clear and obvious video evidence that the passer was out of the pocket area or not facing an imminent loss of yardage; or
- (l) if a foul is called for unnecessary roughness for forcibly contacting a runner when he is out of bounds and there is clear and obvious video evidence that the runner was not out of bounds.

Nothing in this Article precludes a head coach or Replay Official from initiating a challenge or review otherwise allowed under Rule 15, Section 1.

**Item 1. Game Clock.** The game clock is reviewable for purposes of restoring time to the clock but not for purposes of taking time off the clock.

**Notes:**

- (1) *Time can be restored to the game clock if the clock operator incorrectly starts the game clock when it should remain stopped, provided that the correction occurs before the next legal snap or kick.*
- (2) *An on-field ruling that time expired during or after the last play of any half, or of an overtime period in the regular season, or of an overtime half in the postseason, is reviewable by the Replay Official only when the visual evidence demonstrates that the clock should have stopped with two or more seconds remaining. In the first half, time shall be restored only if the additional play will be a snap from scrimmage. In the second half, time shall be restored only if the next play will be a snap from scrimmage by a team that is trailing by eight points or less, or by either team if the score is tied.*
- (3) *The game clock is reviewable to determine if it properly expired when on-field officials restore time after the last play of any half, or of an overtime period in the preseason or regular season, or of an overtime half in the postseason. Visual evidence that a clock should have stopped includes any situation when the clock stops by rule after the ball becomes dead. Visual evidence that the clock should have stopped for a team timeout occurs when an official starts to raise his or her arm to signal a stopped clock.*
- (4) *The game clock is reviewable to determine if the period expired before any snap.*

**ARTICLE 10. DISQUALIFICATION OF A PLAYER.** The Senior Vice President of Officiating or his or her designee may review a decision by on-field officials to disqualify a player. When reviewing a disqualification under this Article other reviewable aspects of the play will not be reviewed unless the Replay Official would otherwise have authority to review the play, or it is challenged by a head coach.

**ARTICLE 11. OTHER REVIEWABLE PLAYS.**

**Item 1. Direction of a Pass.** Whether a pass was forward or backward.

*Note: When an on-field ruling is incomplete, and the pass was clearly backward, the ball will be awarded at the spot of recovery to the team that recovers the ball in the immediate continuing action. If there is no clear recovery, the ball will be awarded to the team last in possession at the spot where possession was lost.*

**Item 2. Illegal Forward Pass.** Whether a pass was illegally thrown.

**Item 3. Field Goal or Try Attempt.** Whether a field goal or Try attempt crossed above the crossbar and inside the uprights is reviewable, but only if the ball crosses the plane of the goal post below the top of the uprights, or if the ball touches anything.

**Item 4. Illegal Forward Handoff.** Whether a player received a handoff clearly in advance of a player making the handoff.

**Item 5. Ball Touching a Foreign Object.** Whether a loose ball touched a scoreboard, guide wire, or any other object.

**Notes:**

- (1) *The Replay Official can initiate a review for this item at any time during the game.*
- (2) *If it is determined that the ball hit an object, the down will be replayed from the previous spot, and the game clock will be reset to the time when the ball was snapped and will start on the snap.*

**SECTION 4 NON-REVIEWABLE PLAYS**

The following aspects of plays are not reviewable:

- (a) Whether an erroneous whistle sounded;
- (b) Whether a ball was illegally batted or kicked;
- (c) Whether a passer intentionally grounded a pass;
- (d) Whether an ineligible receiver was downfield before a pass;
- (e) Whether a receiver was illegally contacted;



- (f) The spot of a loose ball crossing the sideline;
- (g) Whether a block was illegal; and
- (h) Any aspect of a play not listed as reviewable in Section 3 of this Rule.

## SECTION 5 GAME CLOCK ADMINISTRATION

**ARTICLE 1. RESETTING GAME CLOCK.** When a ruling is changed in replay, the clock status following review is determined by Rule 4-3, and the game clock will be reset to the time when the ball should have been declared dead. The game clock is not reset if the on-field ruling is not changed in replay.

**ARTICLE 2. 10-SECOND RUNOFF.** When a changed ruling results in a running clock, or a clock that would have otherwise restarted before the next snap, for plays that begin after the two-minute warning, the clock is reset to the time when the play should have ended, and the clock will run for 10 seconds from the reset time. If less than 10 seconds remain in the half or the game, the half or the game is over.

***Note:** Neither team may decline a 10-second runoff under this Article, but either team can avoid the 10-second runoff by taking a charged team timeout. If the 10-second runoff is avoided, the game clock will be reset to the time when the play should have ended and will start on the snap.*

## SECTION 6 TIMEOUTS FOLLOWING CHALLENGE

**ARTICLE 1. UNSUCCESSFUL CHALLENGE.** A team that makes an unsuccessful challenge is charged a team timeout. If a team takes a team timeout and then unsuccessfully challenges a play, it is charged a second timeout. A challenge is considered successful if any reviewable aspect of the play is changed.

**ARTICLE 2. CHARGED TIMEOUT.** A charged timeout taken after the two-minute warning of either half with the clock running will be restored if a review changes the ruling and the new ruling results in a stopped clock. An injury timeout can be charged or restored if a ruling changed in replay would affect whether an injury timeout is charged.

## SECTION 7 FOULS

**ARTICLE 1. PENALTY ADMINISTRATION.** Penalty administration, including the number of the down, yardage, the number of the fouling player, and the spot of a foul, is reviewable.

**ARTICLE 2. FOUL NULLIFIED BY A CHANGED RULING.** A foul will be nullified when a necessary aspect of the foul is changed in replay. A foul can be created following a review if the reviewable aspect creates the foul, or if the Referee announced before the review that there was no foul on the play because of a specific ruling that is changed in the review.

## ARTICLE 3. ENFORCEMENT OF FOULS FOLLOWING A CHANGED RULING

**Item 1. Major Fouls.** When a ruling is changed in replay, any foul that occurred after the ball should have been declared dead is disregarded except for personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls. Live ball fouls that occurred on the reviewed play may be enforced if they occurred before the ball should have been declared dead.

**Item 2. Pre-Snap Fouls Before Challenge.** Pre-snap fouls, other than personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, that occur before a replay review will be ignored if the ruling on the previous play is changed.

**Item 3. Head Coach's Ability to Change Penalty Decision.** If a ruling is changed in replay, a head coach can change a decision whether to accept or decline a penalty that was made before the review.

## SECTION 8 LOSS OF COMMUNICATION

If communications between the officials and the League office are lost, the Referee will stay at the on-field monitor for one minute while communications are being restored. If communications are not restored within one minute, the Referee will conduct the replay review in consultation with the Replay Official. If communications are restored during the review, the League office will review the play as normal.

## RULE 16 OVERTIME PROCEDURES

### SECTION 1 OVERTIME PROCEDURES

**ARTICLE 1. SCORE TIED.** If the score is tied at the end of the regulation playing time of all regular season and postseason NFL games, a system of modified sudden-death overtime shall be in effect, pursuant to the following.

**ARTICLE 2. END OF REGULATION.** At the end of regulation playing time, the Referee shall immediately toss a coin at the center of the field, in accordance with rules pertaining to a usual pregame toss (4-2-2). The visiting team captain is to again call the toss.

**ARTICLE 3. OVERTIME IN REGULAR SEASON.** Following an intermission of no more than three minutes after the end of a regular season game, an extra period of 10 minutes shall commence. The following shall apply:

- (a) Both teams must have the opportunity to possess the ball once during the extra period, unless the team that receives the opening kickoff scores a touchdown on its initial possession, in which case it is the winner, or if the team kicking off to start the overtime period scores a safety on the receiving team's initial possession, in which case the team that kicked off is the winner. If a touchdown is scored, the game is over, and the Try is not attempted.
- (b) If the team that possesses the ball first does not score on its initial possession, the team next scoring by any method shall be the winner.
- (c) If the team that possesses the ball first scores a field goal on its initial possession, the other team (the second team) shall have the opportunity to possess the ball.
  - (1) If the second team scores a touchdown on its possession, it is the winner.
  - (2) If the second team scores a field goal on its possession, the team next scoring by any method shall be the winner.
  - (3) If the second team does not score on its possession, the game is over, and the first team is the winner, subject to Article 5(a) below.
- (d) There shall be a maximum of one 10-minute period, even if the second team has not had an opportunity to possess the ball or if its initial possession has not ended. If the score is tied at the end of the period, the game shall result in a tie
- (e) Each team shall be entitled to two timeouts, and if there is an excess timeout, the usual rules shall apply (see 4-5). The general provisions for the fourth quarter of a game, including timing, shall apply.

**ARTICLE 4. OVERTIME IN POSTSEASON.** Following an intermission of no more than three minutes after the end of the regular game, an extra period of 15 minutes shall commence. The following shall apply:

- (a) Both teams must have the opportunity to possess the ball at least once during the extra period, unless the team kicking off to start the overtime period scores a safety on the receiving team's initial possession, in which case the team that kicked off is the winner.
- (b) After each team has had an opportunity to possess the ball, if one team has more points than its opponent, it is the winner, subject to Article 5(a) below.
- (c) If the team that possesses the ball first does not score on its initial possession, or if the score is tied after each team has had its opportunity to possess the ball, the team next scoring by any method shall be the winner.
- (d) If the score is tied at the end of a 15-minute overtime period, or if the second team's initial possession has not ended, another overtime period will begin, and play will continue, regardless of how many 15-minute periods are necessary.
- (e) Between each overtime period, there shall be a two-minute intermission, but there shall be no halftime intermission after the second period. At the beginning of the third overtime period, the captain who lost the coin toss prior to the first overtime period shall have the first choice of the two privileges in 4-2-2, unless the team that won the coin toss deferred.
- (f) At the end of the first and third extra periods, etc., teams must change goals in accordance with 4-2-3.
- (g) Each team is entitled to three timeouts during a half. If there is an excess timeout, the usual rules shall apply (see 4-5).
- (h) At the end of a second overtime period, timing rules shall apply as at the end of the first half. At the end of a fourth overtime period, timing rules shall apply as at the end of the fourth period.
- (i) At the end of a fourth overtime period, there will be another coin toss pursuant to Section 1, Article 2, and play will continue until a winner is declared.

**ARTICLE 5. GENERAL RULES APPLICABLE TO OVERTIME.** The following applies in both the regular season and postseason.

- (a) If the first team to possess the ball scores a field goal or touchdown, after which the second team loses possession by an interception or fumble, the down will be permitted to run to its conclusion, and all rules of the game will be enforced as customary, including awarding points scored by either team during the down. Only fouls that require the down to be replayed, fouls that negate a score, or palpably unfair acts will be enforced.

**Notes:**

- (1) *In such situations, if the player who intercepts the pass or recovers the fumble goes to the ground and makes no effort to advance, the covering official will blow his whistle to end the game.*
- (2) *If the second team loses possession by an interception or fumble, but the opponent committed a foul prior to the change of possession, the second team's possession has not legally ended, and the game cannot end on the down. However, in certain situations, the second team cannot decline the penalty and accept the result of the play, or accept a penalty enforcement, if it would create a second possession for itself. In that situation, it can only accept an enforcement that extends its initial possession.*

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*(3) The situation in (2) may also affect the team that receives the opening kickoff during its first possession. If there is a foul by the second team followed by a double change of possession, and the first team accepts the result of the play, the second team has had its required possession, and the first team has possession of the ball for the second time. However, if it accepts the penalty, it will extend its initial possession.*

- (b) A player is in possession when he has a firm grip and control of the ball inbounds (3-2-7). The defense gains possession when it catches, intercepts, or recovers a loose ball.
- (c) The opportunity to possess applies only during kicking plays. A kickoff is the opportunity to possess for the receiving team. If the kicking team legally recovers the kick, the receiving team is considered to have had its opportunity. A punt or field goal attempt that crosses the line of scrimmage and is muffed by the receiving team is considered to be an opportunity to possess for the receiving team. Normal touching rules by the kicking team apply.
- (d) All replay reviews will be initiated by the Replay Official. Coaches' challenges will not be allowed.
- (e) Disqualified player(s) shall not re-enter during any extra period or periods.
- (f) Except as provided for above, all other general and specific rules shall apply.

## RULE 17 EMERGENCIES, UNFAIR ACTS

### SECTION 1 EMERGENCIES

**ARTICLE 1. NON-PLAYER ON FIELD.** If any non-player, including photographers, reporters, employees, police or spectators, enters the field of play or end zones, and in the judgment of an official said party or parties interfere with the play, the Referee, after consulting the crew (13-1-7 and 19-1-3), shall enforce any such penalty or score as the interference warrants.

**ARTICLE 2. FIELD CONTROL.** If spectators enter the field and/or interfere with the progress of the game in such a manner that in the opinion of the Referee the game cannot continue, the Referee shall declare timeout. In such a case, the Referee shall record the number of the down, distance to be gained, and the position of the ball on the field. The Referee shall also secure from the Line Judge the playing time remaining and record it. The Referee shall then order the home club through its management to have the field cleared, and when it is cleared and order restored and the safety of the spectators, players and officials is assured to the satisfaction of the Referee, the game must continue even if it is necessary to use lights.

**ARTICLE 3. GAME CALLED.** If the game must be called due to a state or municipal law, or by darkness if no lights are available, an immediate report shall be made to the Commissioner by the home club, visiting club, and officials. On receipt of all reports, the Commissioner shall make a decision which will be final.

**ARTICLE 4. EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.** The NFL affirms the position that in most circumstances all regular season and postseason games should be played to their conclusion. If, in the opinion of appropriate League authorities, it is impossible to begin or continue a game due to an emergency, or a game is deemed to be imminently threatened by any such emergency (e.g., severely inclement weather, lightning, flooding, power failure), the following procedures (Articles 5 through 11) will serve as guidelines for the Commissioner and/or the duly appointed representatives. The Commissioner has the authority to review the circumstances of each emergency and to adjust the following procedures in whatever manner the Commissioner deems appropriate. If, in the Commissioner's opinion, it is reasonable to project that the resumption of an interrupted game would not change its ultimate result or adversely affect any other inter-team competitive issue, the Commissioner is empowered to terminate the game.

**ARTICLE 5. LEAGUE AUTHORITY.** The League employees vested with the authority to define emergencies under these procedures are the Commissioner, designated representatives from the League office staff, and the game Referee. In those instances where neither the Commissioner nor the designated representative is in attendance at a game, the Referee will have sole authority; provided, however, that if the Referee delays the beginning of or interrupts a game for a significant period of time due to an emergency, the Referee must make every effort to contact the Commissioner or the Commissioner's designated representative for consultation. In all cases of significant delay, the League authorities will consult with the management of the participating clubs and will attempt to obtain appropriate information from outside sources, if applicable (e.g., weather bureau, police).

**ARTICLE 6. LATER DATE.** If, because of an emergency, a regular season or postseason game is not started at its scheduled time and cannot be played at any later time that same day, the game nevertheless must be played on a subsequent date to be determined by the Commissioner.

**ARTICLE 7. PRE-GAME THREAT.** If there is deemed to be a threat of an emergency that may occur during the playing of a game (e.g., an incoming tropical storm), the starting time of such game will not be moved to an earlier time unless there is clearly sufficient time to make an orderly change.

**ARTICLE 8. INTERRUPTED GAME.** If, under emergency circumstances, an interrupted regular season or post season game cannot be completed on the same day, such game will be rescheduled by the Commissioner and resumed at that point.

**ARTICLE 9. ALTERNATE DATES, SITES.** In instances under these emergency procedures which require the Commissioner to reschedule a regular season game, the Commissioner will make every effort to set the game for no later than two days after its originally scheduled date, and will attempt to schedule the game at its original site. If unable to do so, the Commissioner will schedule it at the nearest available facility. If it is impossible to schedule the game within two days after its original date, the Commissioner will be guided by the Emergencies and Unfair Acts provisions in the Policy Manual for Member Clubs: Game Operations.

**ARTICLE 10. POSTSEASON INTERRUPTION.** If an emergency interrupts a postseason game and such game cannot be resumed on that same date, the Commissioner will make every effort to arrange for its completion as soon as possible. If unable to schedule the game at the same site, the Commissioner will select an appropriate alternate site. The Commissioner will terminate the game short of completion only, if in the Commissioner's judgment, the continuation of the game would not be normally expected to alter the ultimate result.

**ARTICLE 11. GAME RESUMPTION.** In all instances where a game is resumed after interruption, either on the same date or a subsequent date, the resumption will begin at the point at which the game was interrupted. At the time of interruption, the Referee will call timeout and will make a record of the following: the team possessing the ball, direction in which its offense was headed, position of the ball on the field, down, distance, period, time remaining in the period, and any other pertinent information required for an efficient and equitable resumption of play.

### SECTION 2 EXTRAORDINARILY UNFAIR ACTS

**ARTICLE 1. COMMISSIONER AUTHORITY.** The Commissioner has the sole authority to investigate and take appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective measures if any club action, non-participant interference, or calamity occurs in an NFL game which the Commissioner deems so extraordinarily unfair or outside the accepted tactics encountered in professional football that such action has a major effect on the result of the game.

**ARTICLE 2. NO CLUB PROTESTS.** The authority and measures provided for in this entire Section 2 do not constitute a protest machinery for NFL clubs to avail themselves of in the event a dispute arises over the result of a game. The investigation called

for in this Section 2 will be conducted solely on the Commissioner's initiative to review an act or occurrence that the Commissioner deems so extraordinary or unfair that the result of the game in question would be inequitable to one of the participating teams. The Commissioner will not apply authority in cases of complaints by clubs concerning judgmental errors or routine errors of omission by game officials. Games involving such complaints will continue to stand as completed.

**ARTICLE 3. PENALTIES FOR UNFAIR ACTS.** The Commissioner's powers under this Section 2 include the imposition of monetary fines and draft-choice forfeitures, suspension of persons involved in unfair acts, and, if appropriate, the reversal of a game's result or the rescheduling of a game, either from the beginning or from the point at which the extraordinary act occurred. In the event of rescheduling a game, the Commissioner will be guided by the procedures specified in 17-1-5-11, above. In all cases, the Commissioner will conduct a full investigation, including the opportunity for hearings, use of game video, and any other procedure the Commissioner deems appropriate.

## RULE 18 GUIDELINES FOR CAPTAINS

### SECTION 1 GUIDELINES FOR CAPTAINS

**ARTICLE 1. NUMBER OF CAPTAINS.** One hour and thirty minutes prior to kickoff: Respective coaches designate a maximum of six captains per team.

**ARTICLE 2. COIN TOSS.**

- (a) Up to six captains per team can participate in the coin toss ceremony (active, inactive, or honorary); only one captain from the visiting team (or a captain designated by the Referee if there is no home team) can declare the choice of the coin toss.
- (b) The team that won the toss may then have only one captain declare its option.
- (c) The team that lost the coin toss may then have only one captain declare its option.

**ARTICLE 3. CHOICE ON PENALTY OPTION.** Only one captain is permitted to indicate the team's penalty option.

**ARTICLE 4. CHANGE OF CAPTAINS.**

- (a) The coach has the prerogative of informing the Referee when he wishes to make a change in team captains.
- (b) A captain who is leaving can inform the Referee which player will act as captain in his place when he is substituted for.
- (c) When a captain leaves the game, the incoming substitute is permitted to inform the Referee which player the respective coach has designated as captain.

**Note:** *A captain on the field has no authority to request a change of fellow team captain when that captain remains on the field.*



## RULE 19 OFFICIALS

### SECTION 1 OFFICIALS

**ARTICLE 1. GAME OFFICIALS.** The game shall be played under the supervision of seven officials: the Referee, Umpire, Down Judge, Line Judge, Field Judge, Side Judge, and Back Judge. In the absence of seven officials, the crew is to be rearranged according to the remaining members of the crew.

**ARTICLE 2. JURISDICTION.** The officials' jurisdiction begins 100 minutes before the scheduled kickoff and ends when the Referee declares the final score.

**ARTICLE 3. REFEREE'S AUTHORITY.** The Referee is to have general oversight and control of the game. The Referee is the final authority for the score. If there is a disagreement between members of the crew regarding the number of down, any decision, or the application, enforcement, or interpretation of a rule, the Referee's decision will be final. The Referee's decisions upon all matters not specifically placed under the jurisdiction of other officials by rule are final.

**ARTICLE 4. RESPONSIBILITIES AND MECHANICS.** Officiating responsibilities and mechanics are specified in the Mechanics Manual, published annually by the National Football League.

### SECTION 2 SUPPORT FROM NFL OFFICIATING STAFF

The Replay Official and designated members of the Officiating department at the League office may consult with the on-field officials to provide objective information regarding on-field rulings and the correct application of playing rules. In addition, if the designated members of the Officiating department determine that a foul for a football or non-football act called on the field is flagrant, then they can instruct the on-field officiating crew to disqualify the player(s) who committed the foul. Those players who were not penalized, but who engaged in football or non-football acts that were determined to be flagrant and directly related to the foul called on the field, may also be disqualified by designated members of the Officiating department. A penalty will be assessed when a player was not penalized by on-field officials but was subsequently disqualified pursuant to this Section. The determination that a foul is flagrant must be based on the available video, and the designated members of the Officiating department must instruct the officiating crew to disqualify the identified player(s) before the ball is next legally put in play.

Distance Penalties	
Loss of Five Yards	
Delay of game .....	4-6
Encroachment .....	7-4-3
False start .....	7-4-2
Holding (defense) .....	12-1-6
Illegal contact .....	8-4-3
Illegal formation (free kick) .....	6-1-3, 6-1-6
Illegal formation (scrimmage down) .....	7-5-1
Illegal formation (scrimmage kick) .....	9-1-3
Illegal forward handing .....	8-7-4
Illegal kick .....	6-1-1, 6-1-6
Illegal motion .....	7-4-8
Illegal shift .....	7-4-7
Illegal snap .....	7-6-3, 7-6-4
Illegal substitution .....	4-7-2, 5-2-8, 5-3-2
Illegal touching of a forward pass .....	8-1-8
Illegally touching of a free kick .....	6-2-5
Illegal use of hands by defense .....	12-1-7
Ineligible player downfield on kick .....	9-1-2
Ineligible player downfield on pass .....	8-3-1
Invalid fair catch signal .....	10-2-2
Kicking team player voluntarily out of bounds .....	9-1-5
Neutral zone infraction .....	7-4-4
Offside .....	7-4-5
Punt, drop kick, or place kick from beyond the line .....	9-1-1
Running into kicker .....	12-2-12
Second excess team timeout after two-minute warning .....	4-5-4
Team timeout called when not allowed .....	4-5-1
Too many players on the field .....	5-1-1
Voluntarily going out of bounds on free kick .....	6-2-6
Loss of Ten Yards	
Assisting the runner .....	12-1-4
Holding (offense) .....	12-1-3(c)
Illegal batting .....	12-5-1
Illegal blocking or use of hands (free kick) .....	6-2-1, 6-2-2
Illegal kicking .....	12-5-2
Illegal use of hands (offense) .....	12-1-3(a)
Illegal block in the back .....	12-1-3(b)
Offensive pass interference .....	8-5-2, 8-5-4
Loss of Fifteen Yards	
Attempting to call excess/illegal timeout to freeze kicker ..	12-3-1(v)
Blindside block .....	12-2-7
Blocking a kicking team player out of bounds .....	12-2-8(c)
Chop block .....	12-2-5
Clipping .....	12-2-1
Concealing ball or using equipment to simulate ball .....	12-3-1(j)
Crackback block .....	12-2-6
Delaying the start of a half .....	4-2-1(a)
Disconcerting acts or signals .....	12-3-1(i)

Forcibly contacting a player out of bounds .....	12-2-8(b)
Goaltending .....	12-3-1(s)
Horse-collar tackle .....	12-2-16
Illegal block after fair catch signal .....	10-2-2
Illegal block below the waist .....	12-2-4
Hip-drop tackle .....	12-2-18
Illegal contact after a fair catch .....	10-2-3
Illegal cut block .....	8-4-5, 12-2-3
Illegal double team block .....	6-2-1, Item 2(c), 6-2-2, Item 2(d)
Illegal wedge on free kick .....	6-2-1, Item 2(d), 6-2-2, Item 2(d)
Illegally entering field .....	4-1-2
Impermissible Use of the Helmet .....	12-2-10
Interference with a fair catch .....	10-1-1
Interference with the opportunity to make a catch .....	10-1-1
Kicker or holder simulating being roughed .....	12-3-1(t)
Kicking player not attempting to return inbounds .....	12-3-1(u)
Leaping .....	12-3-1(o), (r)
Leg whip .....	12-2-8(a)
Leverage .....	12-3-1(p)
Non-player unnecessary contact or abusive language .....	13-8
Peel back block .....	12-2-2
Picking up a teammate to block a kick .....	12-3-1(q)
Player going in motion in front of bench area .....	12-3-1(l)
Prohibited contact to a defenseless player .....	12-2-9
Prolonged or excessive celebration .....	12-3-1(f)
Pulling opponent off a pile of players .....	12-2-8(h)
Pushing teammate on scrimmage kick .....	9-1-3
Removal of helmet in the field of play .....	12-3-1(h)
Repeated illegal substitutions when time is in .....	12-3-1(m)
Roughing the holder .....	12-2-13
Roughing the kicker .....	12-2-12
Roughing the passer .....	12-2-11
Striking, kicking, tripping or kneeling an opponent .....	12-2-14
Successive delay of game penalties when time in .....	12-3-1(n)
Throwing a punch, forearm, or kicking at opponent .....	12-3-1(a)
Twisting, turning or pulling of opponent's facemask .....	12-2-15
Unnecessary contact against a runner .....	12-2-8(d), (f)
Unnecessary contact against player on the ground .....	12-2-8(e)
Unnecessary contact to a kicker out of the play .....	12-2-8(i)
Unnecessary contact to a player out of the play .....	12-2-8(g)
Unnecessary physical contact with game official .....	12-3-1(e)
Unnecessary roughness .....	12-2-8
Unsportsmanlike conduct by non-player .....	13-1
Use of the helmet as a weapon .....	12-2-17
Using abusive, threatening or insulting language .....	12-3-1(b)
Using an object as a prop .....	12-3-1(g)
Using baiting or taunting acts or words .....	12-3-1(c)
Using substitutes or returning players to deceive .....	12-3-1(k)
Violent, offensive, or sexually suggestive gesture .....	12-3-1(d)
Loss of Down Without Yardage	
Illegal touching of forward pass by an eligible receiver who had gone out of bounds and reestablished .....	8-1-8(b)

<b>Loss of Down with Yardage</b>	
Illegal batting behind the line of scrimmage .....	12-5-1
Illegal forward handing beyond the line of scrimmage or to an ineligible receiver behind the line of scrimmage .....	8-7-4
Illegal forward pass.....	8-1-2
<b>Backward Pass Out of Bounds that Conserves Time.....</b>	<b>8-7-2</b>
Intentional grounding .....	8-2-1
Illegal kicking behind the line of scrimmage .....	12-5-2
Punt, drop kick, or place kick from beyond scrimmage.....	9-1-1
<b>Ball Placed on 1-Yard Line</b>	
Defensive pass interference in its end zone and previous spot is outside its 2-yard line.....	8-5
<b>Time Penalty</b>	
Actions to conserve time.....	4-7-1
Fouling by defense, illegal touching or fair catch interfering by offense or fouling by both teams at end of half during play in which time expires (extend quarter) .....	4-8-2
<b>Replay Penalties</b>	
Defensive foul on unsuccessful Try .....	11-3-3
Double foul without change of possession .....	14-5-1
<b>Scoring Penalties</b>	
<b>Try</b>	
Foul by Team B that would result in a safety during Try .....	11-3-3
<b>Score Awarded</b>	
Palpably unfair act.....	12-3-4, 13-1-7
Repeated fouling by defense to prevent score .....	12-3-2
<b>Safety</b>	
Enforcement for offensive foul behind goal line.....	11-5-1, 14-2-2
Intentional grounding in own end zone.....	8-2-1
<b>Score Not Allowed</b>	
Offending team scores after foul during down in which time expires for half (with no extension of time).....	4-8-2(b)
<b>Unsuccessful Try</b>	
Team A committing foul during a Try which would ordinarily result: in loss of down or in a touchback.....	11-3-3
in loss of ball in field of play (not during a kick) .....	11-3-3
Team B recovering ball.....	11-3-3
<b>New Series Penalties</b>	
Team B foul during scrimmage down.....	14-1-2, Item 5
<b>Combination Penalties</b>	
<b>Loss of Ball and Fifteen Yards</b>	
Fair catch interference .....	10-1-1
Prohibited contact against a kick returner .....	12-2-9(a)(6)

<b>Time Restored and Fifteen Yards</b>	
Intentional fouls to manipulate game clock .....	12-3-3
<b>Miscellaneous Situations</b>	
<b>Fair Catch Awarded</b>	
Interference with opportunity to make fair catch .....	10-1-1, 10-2-2
<b>First down at Spot of Foul</b>	
Defensive pass interference.....	8-5-2, 4
<b>Safety</b>	
Ball in possession of team behind or out of bound behind own goal line and impetus from player of that team .....	11-5-1
<b>Touchback</b>	
Illegal touching of scrimmage kick inside five-yard line .....	9-2-3
<b>Kickoff Out of Bounds Between Goal Lines</b>	
Receiver's ball at inbounds spot.....	6-2-4
Receiver's ball 25 yards from spot of kick.....	6-2-4
<b>Kickoff Not Reaching the Landing Zone</b>	
Receiver's ball at inbounds spot.....	6-2-4
Receiver's ball 25 yards from spot of kick.....	6-2-4
Receiver's ball at the spot where ball lands or touched .....	6-2-4
<b>Ball Remains Dead</b>	
Actions that delay game.....	4-6-4, 4-6-5
Snapping before Officials assume normal position .....	4-6-5(b)
<b>Ball Dead Immediately</b>	
Committing acts <b>that</b> conserve time.....	4-7-1
Kickers recovering free kick.....	6-1-4(d)(1)
Kickers advancing after recovery of a scrimmage kick unless behind line .....	9-3-1, 9-3-2
Any kick touching receiver's goal post or cross bar unless scoring field goal .....	6-1-5(c), 9-4-2, 11-6-2(d)
Official sounding whistle.....	7-2-1(o), 7-2-2
Catch after fair catch signal.....	10-2-3
<b>Penalty Enforced from Goal Line</b>	
Spot of enforcement behind other team's goal line .....	14-2-2
Runner crosses opponent's goal line and spot of enforcing foul by teammate during run is behind defense goal line.....	14-2-2
<b>Penalty Enforced on Next Free Kick</b>	
Personal foul, unsportsmanlike conduct foul, or palpably unfair act committed during opponent scoring play .....	14-2-3
<b>Loss of Fifteen Yards from the Kicking Team's Restraining Line</b>	
<b>Onside Kick Untouched Beyond Onside Kick Setup Zone....</b>	<b>6-1-6</b>

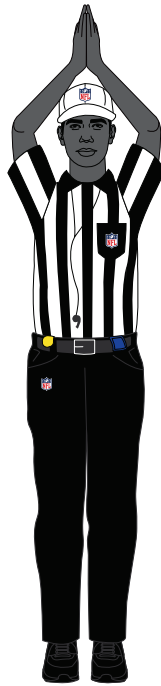
# Official Signals



1

**TOUCHDOWN, FIELD GOAL,  
or SUCCESSFUL TRY**

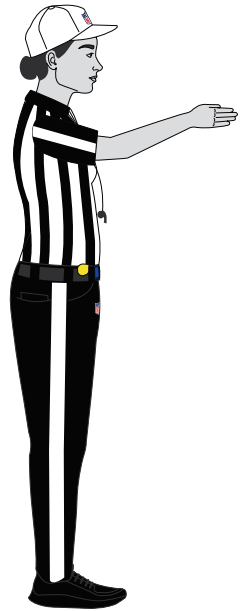
Both arms extended above head.



2

**SAFETY**

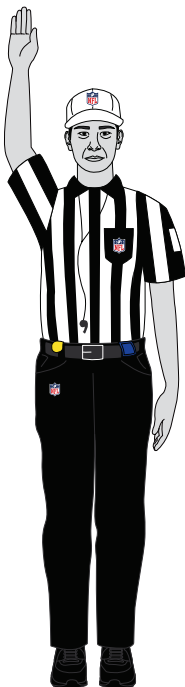
Palms together above head.



3

**FIRST DOWN**

Arms pointed toward defensive  
team's goal.

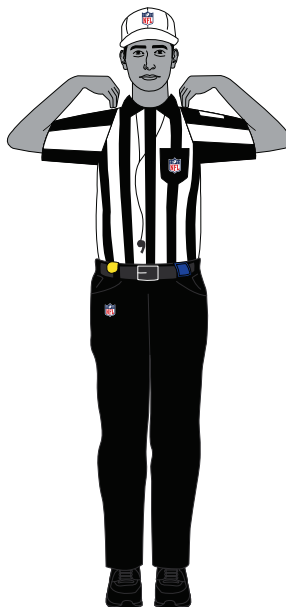


4

**CROWD NOISE, DEAD BALL, or  
NEUTRAL ZONE ESTABLISHED**

One arm above head with an open hand.

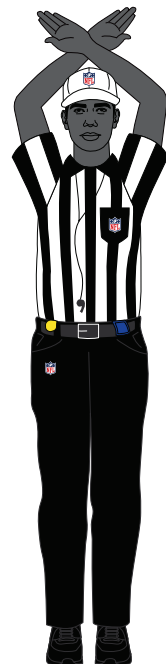
With fist closed: **Fourth Down.**



5

**BALL ILLEGALLY  
TOUCHED, KICKED,  
OR BATTED**

Fingertips tap both shoulders.

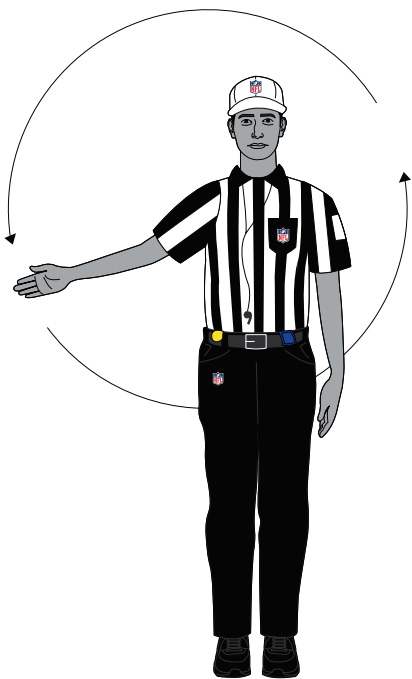


6

**TIMEOUT**

Hands crisscrossed above head. Same  
signal followed by placing one hand on  
top of cap: **Referee's Timeout.**

Same signal followed by arm swung at  
side: **Touchback.**



**7**

**NO TIMEOUT or TIME  
IN WITH WHISTLE**

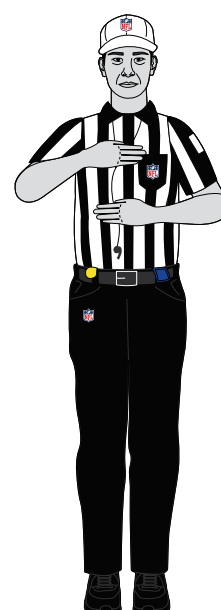
Full arm circled to simulate moving clock.



**8**

**DELAY OF GAME  
OFFENSE/DEFENSE or  
EXCESS TIMEOUT**

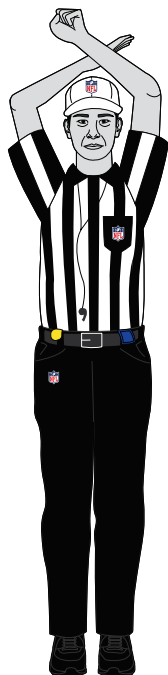
Folded arms.



**9**

**FALSE START, ILLEGAL  
FORMATION, FREE KICK OUT OF  
BOUNDS OR NOT REACHING THE  
LANDING ZONE, or KICKING TEAM  
PLAYER VOLUNTARILY  
OUT OF BOUNDS DURING A KICK**

Forearms rotated over and over in front of body.



**10**

**PERSONAL FOUL**

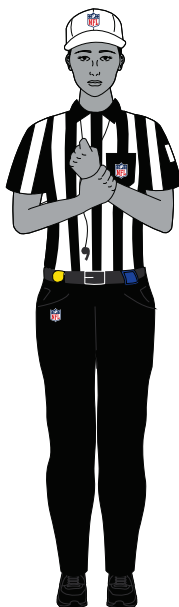
One wrist striking the other above head.

Same signal followed by swinging leg:

**Roughing Kicker.**

Same signal followed by raised arm  
swinging forward: **Roughing Passer.**

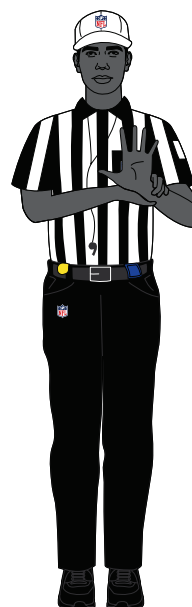
Same signal followed by grasping  
facemask: **Facemask.**



**11**

**HOLDING**

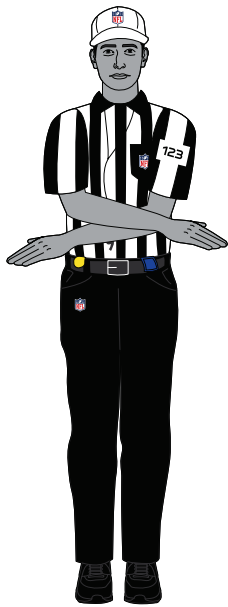
Grasping one wrist, the fist clenched,  
in front of chest.



**12**

**ILLEGAL USE OF HANDS,  
ARMS, OR BODY**

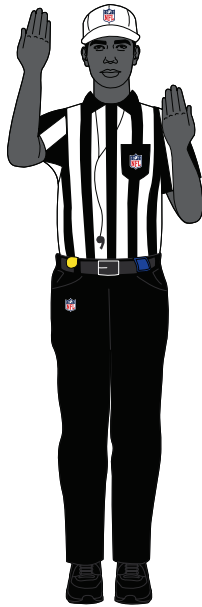
Grasping one wrist, the hand open and  
facing forward, in front of chest.



**13**

**PENALTY REFUSED, INCOMPLETE  
PASS, PLAY OVER, or  
MISSED GOAL**

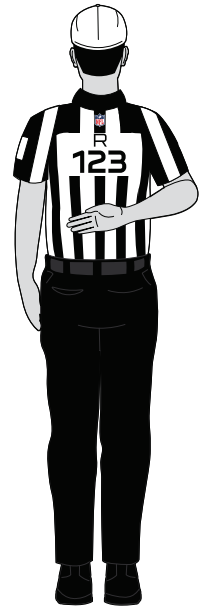
Hands shifted in horizontal plane.



**14**

**PASS BOBBLED INBOUNDS AND  
CAUGHT OUT OF BOUNDS**

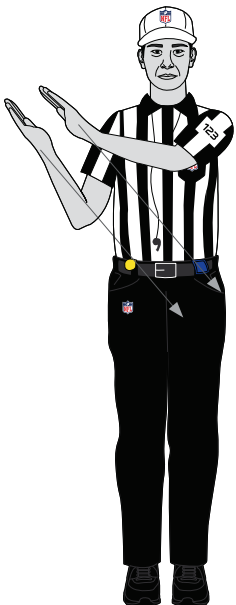
Hands up and down in front of chest  
(following incomplete pass signal).



**15**

**ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS**

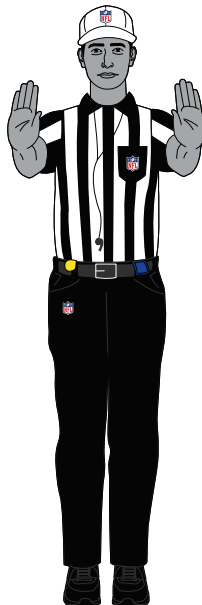
One hand waved behind back followed  
by loss of down signal (23) when  
appropriate.



**16**

**INTENTIONAL  
GROUNDING OF PASS**

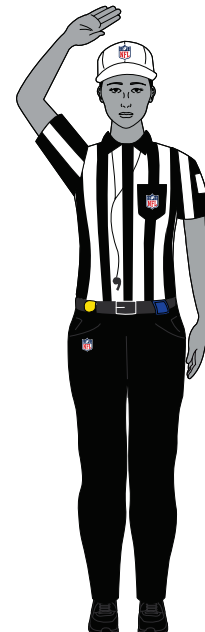
Parallel arms waved in a diagonal plane  
across body. Followed by loss of down  
signal (23).



**17**

**INTERFERENCE WITH FORWARD  
PASS or FAIR CATCH**

Hands open and extended forward from  
shoulders with hands vertical.

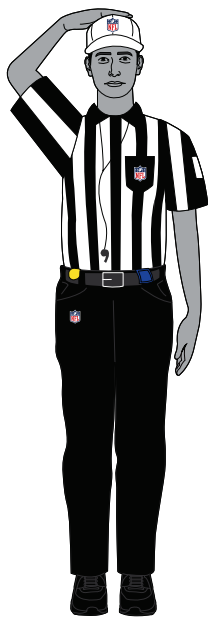


**18**

**INVALID FAIR-CATCH SIGNAL**

One hand waved above head.

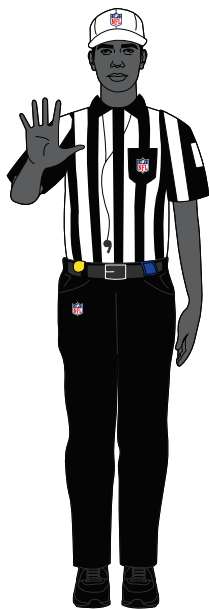




**19**

**INELIGIBLE RECEIVER  
or INELIGIBLE MEMBER  
OF KICKING TEAM  
DOWNFIELD**

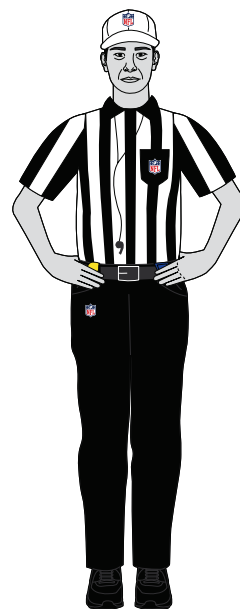
Right hand touching top of cap.



**20**

**ILLEGAL CONTACT**

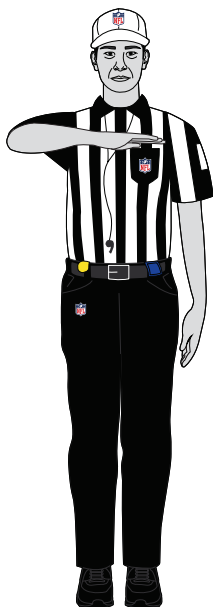
One open hand extended forward.



**21**

**OFFSIDE, ENCROACHMENT, OR  
NEUTRAL ZONE INFRACTION**

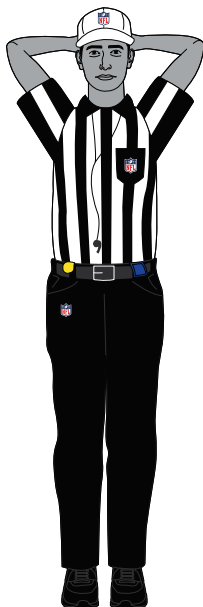
Hands on hips.



**22**

**ILLEGAL MOTION AT SNAP**

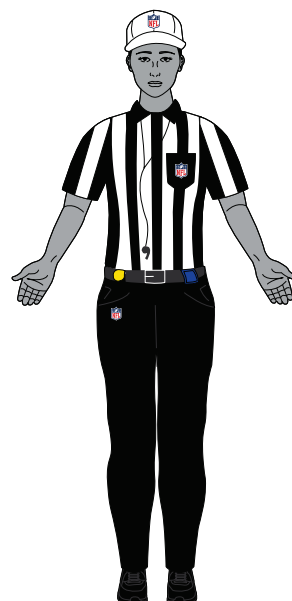
Horizontal arc with one hand.



**23**

**LOSS OF DOWN**

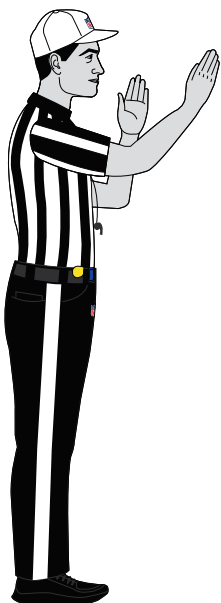
Both hands held behind head.



**24**

**INTERLOCKING  
INTERFERENCE, PUSHING,  
or HELPING RUNNER**

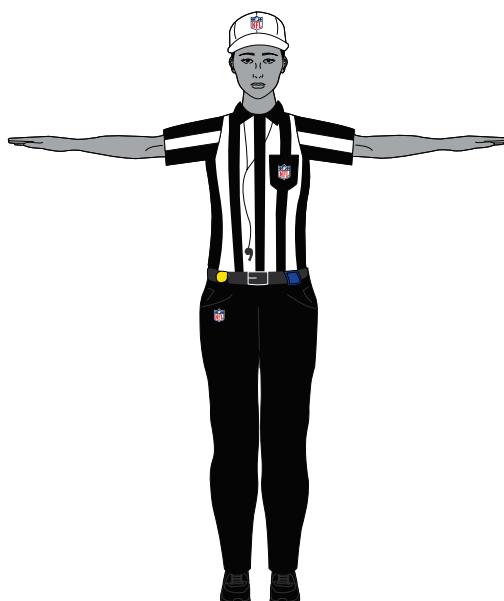
Pushing movement of hands to front with  
arms downward.



**25**

**TOUCHING A FORWARD PASS OR SCRIMMAGE KICK**

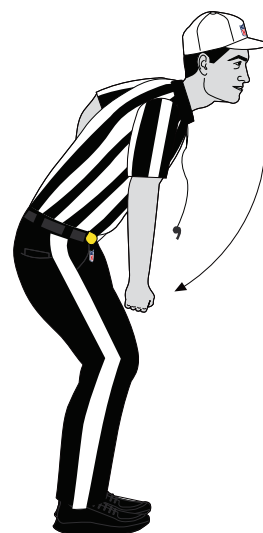
Diagonal motion of one hand across another.



**26**

**UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

Arms outstretched, palms down.



**27**

**ILLEGAL BLOCK BELOW THE WAIST, ILLEGAL CUT**

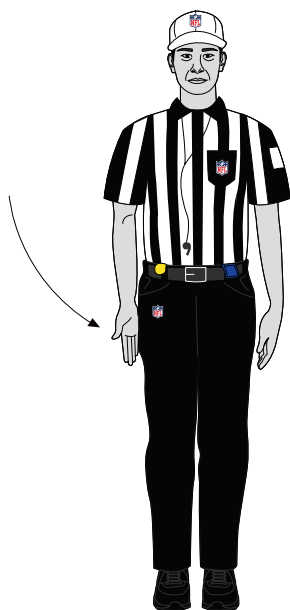
Both hands striking front of thigh preceded by personal foul signal (10).

**CHOP BLOCK**

Both hands striking side of thighs preceded by personal foul signal (10).

**CLIPPING**

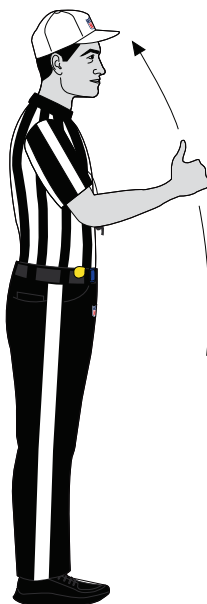
One hand striking back of calf preceded by personal foul signal (10).



**28**

**ILLEGAL CRACKBACK**

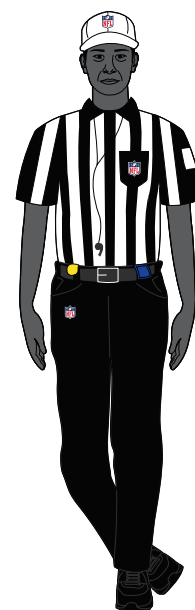
Strike of an open right hand against the right mid thigh preceded by personal foul signal (10).



**29**

**PLAYER DISQUALIFIED**

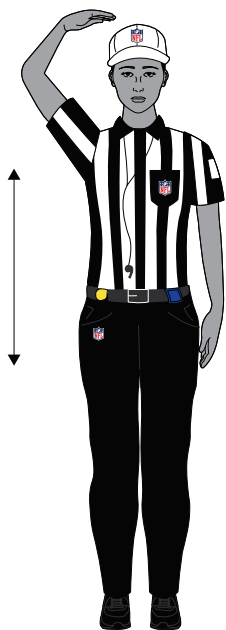
Ejection signal.



**30**

**TRIPPING**

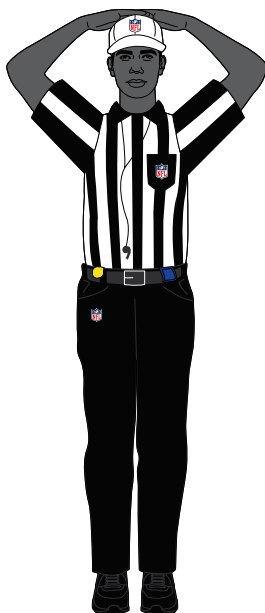
Repeated action of right foot in back of left heel.



**31**

**UNCATCHABLE  
FORWARD PASS**

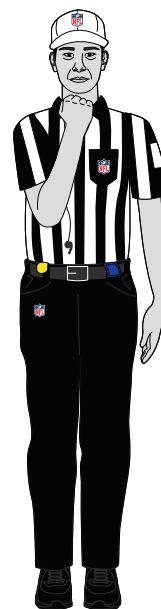
Palm of right hand held parallel to ground  
above head and moved back and forth.



**32**

**ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTION,  
12 MEN IN OFFENSIVE HUDDLE, or  
TOO MANY MEN ON THE FIELD**

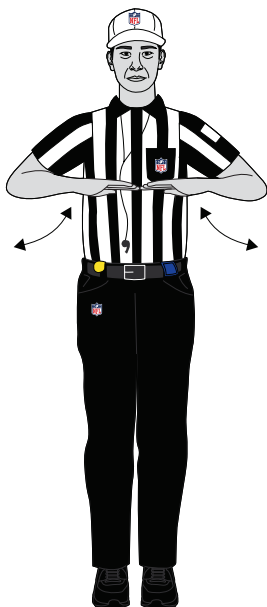
Both hands on top of head.



**33**

**FACEMASK**

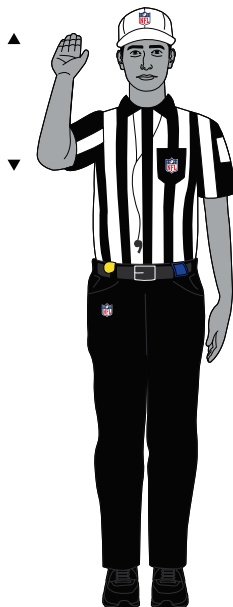
Grasping motion with one hand  
near face.



**34**

**ILLEGAL SHIFT**

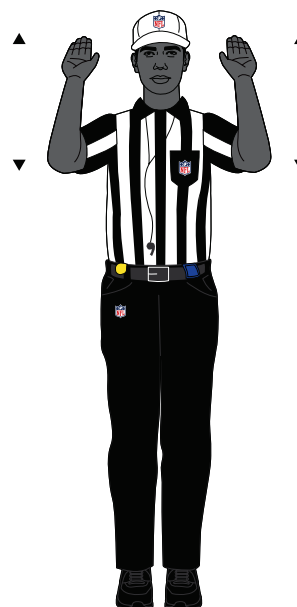
Horizontal arcs with two hands.



**35**

**RESET PLAY CLOCK—  
25 SECONDS**

Pump one arm vertically.



**36**

**RESET PLAY CLOCK—  
40 SECONDS**

Pump two arms vertically.

## TABLE OF FOUL CODES

PENALTY	FOUL CODE	PENALTY	FOUL CODE
Chop Block	CHB	Illegal Shift	ISH
Clipping	CLP	Illegal Substitution	ILS
Defensive Delay of Game	DOD	Illegal Touch—Kick	ITK
Defensive Holding	DH	Illegal Touch—Pass	ITP
Defensive Offside	DOF	Illegal Use of Hands	ILH
Defensive Pass Interference	DPI	Illegal Wedge	WED
Defensive Too Many Men on Field	DTM	Impermissible Use of Helmet	UOH
Delay of Game	DOG	Ineligible Downfield Kick	IDK
Delay of Kickoff	DOK	Ineligible Downfield Pass	IDP
Disqualification	DSQ	Intentional Grounding	ING
Encroachment	ENC	Invalid Fair Catch Signal	IFC
Facemask	FMM	Kick Catch Interference	KCI
Fair Catch Interference	FCI	Kickoff Out of Bounds	KOB
False Start	FST	<b>Landing Zone</b>	<b>LZ</b>
<b>Hip-Drop Tackle</b>	<b>HDT</b>	Leaping	LEA
Horse Collar	HC	Leverage	LEV
Illegal Bat	BAT	Low Block	LBL
Illegal Blindside Block	BLI	Neutral Zone Infraction	NZI
Illegal Block Above the Waist	IBW	Offensive Holding	OH
Illegal Contact	ICT	Offensive Offside	OOF
Illegal Crackback	ICB	Offensive Pass Interference	OPI
Illegal Cut	ICU	Offensive Too Many Men on Field	OTM
Illegal Double Team Block	IDT	Offside on Free Kick	OFK
Illegal Formation	ILF	Player Out of Bounds on Kick	POK
Illegal Forward Handoff	IFH	Roughing the Kicker	RRK
Illegal Forward Pass	IFP	Roughing the Passer	RPS
Illegal Kick/Kicking Loose Ball	KIK	Running into the Kicker	RNK
Illegal Motion	ILM	Taunting	TAU
Illegal Peel Back	IPB	Tripping	TRP
Illegal Punt	IPU	Unnecessary Roughness	UNR

### TEAM ABBREVIATION CODES

Arizona Cardinals	ARZ	Las Vegas Raiders	LV
Atlanta Falcons	ATL	Los Angeles Chargers	LAC
Baltimore Ravens	BLT	Los Angeles Rams	LA
Buffalo Bills	BUF	Miami Dolphins	MIA
Carolina Panthers	CAR	Minnesota Vikings	MIN
Chicago Bears	CHI	New England Patriots	NE
Cincinnati Bengals	CIN	New Orleans Saints	NO
Cleveland Browns	CLV	New York Giants	NYG
Dallas Cowboys	DAL	New York Jets	NYJ
Denver Broncos	DEN	Philadelphia Eagles	PHI
Detroit Lions	DET	Pittsburgh Steelers	PIT
Green Bay Packers	GB	San Francisco 49ers	SF
Houston Texans	HST	Seattle Seahawks	SEA
Indianapolis Colts	IND	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	TB
Jacksonville Jaguars	JAX	Tennessee Titans	TEN
Kansas City Chiefs	KC	Washington Commanders	WAS

#	
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“2024 NFL Casebook”

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# 2024 OFFICIAL CASEBOOK OF THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE



Devised, Amended, and Authenticated  
by the  
National Football League

Roger Goodell, Commissioner

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## **RULE 3 DEFINITIONS**

### **A.R. 3.1 INTENTIONAL FUMBLE FORWARD**

Second-and-6 on A40. A1 runs to the A47 and pretends to fumble but throws the ball forward out of bounds. Seven minutes remain in the game.

**Ruling:** A's ball, third-and-4 on A42. Illegal forward pass. The clock starts on the snap. (8-1-1)

### **A.R. 3.2 INTENTIONAL FUMBLE FORWARD—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Fourth-and-10 on B35. With 1:22 left in the game, and Team B ahead 21-20, A1 scrambles to the B21 and intentionally fumbles the ball forward to the B20 where it is recovered by B1 who returns it to the B22.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B26. This is an illegal forward pass thrown from beyond the line and is dead (incomplete) when it hits the ground. (3-2-5). The five-yard penalty is enforced from the spot of the pass, which takes the ball back to a spot that is short of the line to gain. The loss of down results in the ball going over to Team B on downs. (3-21-2, 8-1-1). There is no 10-second runoff because the result after enforcement is a change of possession.

### **A.R. 3.3 FUMBLE—OUT OF BOUNDS**

Third-and-4 on A35. A1 runs to the A41, is tackled near the sideline, and fumbles the ball. B1, on his feet, gains control of the ball at the sideline at the A39 with one foot inbounds, and then his second foot hits out of bounds.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A39. B1 did not possess the ball with two feet inbounds. The ball is placed at the out of bounds spot, since it was behind the spot of the fumble, and the game clock starts on the Referee's signal that a ball has been returned to the field of play. (3-2-5, 4-3-2).

### **A.R. 3.4 DOT THE I—COMPLETE/INCOMPLETE PASS**

Second-and-10 on A35. A1 throws a forward pass to A2 at the A47 sideline. While A2 is stretched out over the sideline, he controls the ball and "hangs" over the sideline with both feet contacting the ground inbounds: (a) the first thing to hit the ground out of bounds is the point of the ball, but the ball does not move in his hands; or (b) as he lands on his shoulder out of bounds, he loses possession of the ball.

**Rulings:**

(a) First-and-10 on A47. Completed catch. (3-2-7-Note 2)

(b) Third-and-10 on A35. Incomplete pass. (3-2-7-Note 2)

### **A.R. 3.5 LOOSE BALL BETWEEN LEGS OF PLAYER—NO POSSESSION**

Second-and-10 on B40. A1 runs with the ball to the B30 where he fumbles. In the scramble for the loose ball, B1 ends up on the ground with the ball securely held between his legs, although his hands/arms are not around the ball. A2, while standing on his feet, reaches down and pulls the ball from B2 and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown. Kickoff A35. Possession requires control with the hands or arms. (3-2-7)

### **A.R. 3.6 PASS CONTROLLED AT SIDELINE—PLAYER KNOCKED OUT OF BOUNDS BEFORE TWO FEET DOWN**

First-and-10 on A30. A1 throws a pass for A2 near the sideline at the 50. B1 leaps near the sideline to intercept, controls the ball, and comes down with one foot inbounds. His second foot would have come down inbounds, but A2 shoves him out of bounds.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on A30. Incomplete pass. (3-2-7, 8-1-3).

### **A.R. 3.7 DROP KICK—ON-SIDE KICK**

From an on-side kick formation, kicker A1 drops the ball at the A35-yard line, where he kicks it into the air immediately after it bounces off the ground. B1 signals for a fair catch and catches the ball at the 50.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Legal fair catch. B1's fair catch signal is valid because the ball did not touch the ground after it was kicked. If the kicker attempts a drop kick, but does not kick the ball as, or immediately after, it touches the ground, the kick is illegal, and officials should blow the play dead.

### **A.R. 3.8 PENALTY FOR DISQUALIFIED PLAYER FAILING TO LEAVE BENCH AREA**

In the third quarter, A2 is disqualified from the game for slugging an opponent. The Referee properly advises the head coach that the player must be removed from the bench area. Near the end of the third quarter, the Referee notices the player in street clothes in the bench area after having been told to leave.

**Ruling:** Fifteen-yard penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct, and the disqualified player is removed from the playing area (3-7).

### **A.R. 3.9 FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—BEHIND THE LINE**

Fourth-and-7 on A40. A1's punt is blocked, and it goes straight up in the air behind the line of scrimmage. B1 signals for a fair catch (valid or invalid) on the A36 and is tackled immediately by A3.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A36. No foul by A3 or B1 since a fair catch cannot occur behind the line of scrimmage (3-9).

### **A.R. 3.10 DEAD BALL FOUL—AFTER FIRST DOWN MADE**

Second-and-6 on A38. A1 runs to the 50 and is tackled. Immediately after the play, A3 clips B4 at the A48.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on A35. A dead ball foul is enforced from the succeeding spot. However, A made the line to gain, thus it is a first down and ten yards to go after a 15-yard penalty (14-4-9).

**A.R. 3.11 TEAM A PASS INTERCEPTED IN B'S END ZONE—FUMBLE—IMPETUS**

Third-and-6 on B24. B1 intercepts a pass in his end zone and attempts to run it out. He is tackled in the end zone and fumbles the ball out of bounds over the end line.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback (3-16).

**A.R. 3.12 TEAM A BLOCKS TEAM B PLAYER INTO PUNT—TOUCHING / IMPETUS**

Fourth-and-5 on A44. A1 punts and the ball is nearly at rest when A2 blocks B3 (high) into the ball (new impetus). B3 was not attempting to block or recover the ball. The ball goes into the end zone where A3 falls on it.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback. The touching of the ball by B3 is ignored, so the ball is dead for a touchback when the punted ball hits in the end zone, untouched by Team B.

***Note:** The impetus that puts the ball into the end zone is A2's block of passive B3, (who is not attempting to block or recover the ball). If the official feels the block by A2 was unnecessary, A2 could be flagged for hitting a player out of the play and penalized for unnecessary roughness.*

**A.R. 3.13 BLOCKED PUNT INTO END ZONE—IMPETUS**

Fourth-and-10 on A7. A's punt is partially blocked by B1. B2 muffs the ball at the A10, and the ball rebounds into A's end zone where: (a) A2 falls on it; (b) A3 and B3 simultaneously recover it; or (c) the ball rolls over the end line.

**Rulings:**

(a) Safety (3-16, 3-28)

(b) Touchdown (3-16, 11-2-1)

(c) Safety (3-16, 11-5-1)

***Note:** If A had recovered in the field of play, it would have been A's ball, first-and-10 since Team B touched the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.*

**A.R. 3.14 BAT BY TEAM B ON PUNT INTO TEAM B END ZONE**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. A1's punt is rolling on the B10 when B1 bats the ball backward out of the back of the end zone. At the time of the bat, the rolling punt was: (a) nearly at rest; or (b) still rolling toward the sideline (not nearly at rest).

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) Safety B, Safety Kick B20.

***Note:** The bat is legal in both (a) and (b), but any bat of a loose ball creates a new impetus.*

**A.R. 3.15 RUNNER DIVES - HITS PYLON - BALL IN TEAM B END ZONE**

Third-and-goal on B3. A1 dives at the B1, and his shoulder hits the pylon with the ball in his right arm at the B½-yard line. He continues into the end zone where his chest is the first thing to touch the ground, hitting in the end zone just after the ball crosses the goal line extended.

**Ruling:** Touchdown. Kickoff A35 (3-20-1).

**A.R. 3.16 PYLON—GOAL LINE EXTENDED**

Second-and-goal on B5. A2, running to his right, is contacted by B2, and as he is going down at the B1, he dives toward the pylon. The ball is held in his right hand extended over the out of bounds area but beyond the extended goal line, when his chest hits: (a) the ground, just short of the goal line (A2's chest is the first thing to hit the ground); (b) the pylon, after which he lands out of bounds beyond the goal line extended; or (c) the ground in the end zone. The ball crossed the sideline at the B½-yard line, but it never went over the top of the pylon.

**Rulings:**

(a) Third-and-goal on B½. Since the runner was down short of the goal line, the ball must break the goal-line plane, hit the pylon, or go over the top of the pylon for a touchdown.

(b) Third-and-goal on B½. Since the runner was out of bounds, the ball must break the goal-line plane between the pylons, hit the pylon, or go over the top of the pylon for a touchdown.

(c) Touchdown, as the ball broke the plane of the extended goal line, and the runner was not down until he was in the end zone. (3-38, 11-2-1)

**A.R. 3.17 RUNNER TOUCHING OUT OF BOUNDS PLAYER**

Third-and-goal on B7. Runner A2 runs toward the sideline and is inbounds at the B1-yard line when he touches A3 who is out of bounds at the time. A2 then scores.

**Ruling:** Touchdown. (3-20-1)

**A.R. 3.18 RUNNER TOUCHING OUT OF BOUNDS OFFICIAL**

On a kickoff, B1 catches the ball near the sideline and then touches the Line Judge who is standing on the sideline at the B10. B1 goes out of bounds at the B18.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B18 (3-20-1).

**A.R. 3.19 PLAYER OUT OF BOUNDS TOUCHES LOOSE BALL IN BOUNDS**

Third-and-4 on A43. A1 runs to the A49 where B1, who is standing out of bounds, strips or knocks the ball loose from A1, making contact with the ball after knocking it loose. B2 recovers at the B48.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A49. This is considered a loose ball touching a player out of bounds and the ball is dead. If the ball does not come loose or the out of bounds player does not make contact with the ball, the play is not dead (3-20-3).

**A.R. 3.20 PLAYER OUT OF BOUNDS—BATS LOOSE BALL**

On a kickoff from the A35, the ball is rolling near the sideline at the B15. B2's right foot steps on the sideline, his left foot then steps down inbounds at the B15, and B2 then bats the ball forward and out of bounds at the B25.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Kickoff out of bounds. B2 never reestablished possession inbounds. The ball was out of bounds when B2 touched it so there is no foul for an illegal bat (3-20-3).

**A.R. 3.21 TEAM A FUMBLE—B RECOVERS AND RUNS FOR TOUCHDOWN—DEAD BALL FOUL BY TEAM B**

Second-and-7 on B45. Shotgun quarterback A1 hands the ball forward to running back A2 at the B48. A2 muffs the handoff, and B3 recovers it and runs for a touchdown. After the touchdown, B4 slugs A3.

**Ruling:** Touchdown for Team B. The penalty is enforced on the Try. Disqualify B4 (3-2-6, 14-4-9).

**A.R. 3.22 ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS**

Third-and-5 on A40. A2 is running with the ball at the B30 where he tosses it underhand to A3 who catches it at the B29. A3 continues on for an apparent touchdown.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B35. This is an illegal forward pass (3-21-4).

**A.R. 3.23 TEAM B BATS BACKWARD PASS OUT OF TEAM A'S END ZONE**

Third-and-5 on A7. Quarterback A1 attempts a backward pass to A3 from the A4. B1 bats the pass over the end line.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick from A20 (3-16, 3-21-5). A new impetus is not created unless the backward pass has first struck the ground (3-16-c).

**A.R. 3.24 ILLEGAL SCRIMMAGE KICK—BEYOND LINE—RECOVERED BY TEAM A BEHIND LINE**

Fourth-and-6 on A35. Punter A1 runs to the A37 and punts the ball. It is blocked by B1 and rolls behind the line to the A33. A2 picks up the ball and runs to the 50.

**Ruling:** B's ball First-and-10 on A32. Five-yard penalty and loss of down.

**A.R. 3.25 ILLEGALLY KICKING/BATTING LOOSE BALL BEHIND LINE OF SCRIMMAGE**

Fourth-and-5 on B30. Quarterback A1 muffs the hand-to-hand snap, and while the ball is loose on the ground at the B31, (a) A1 deliberately kicks it, causing it to go out of bounds at the B24, or (b) A1 bats the ball, causing it to go out of bounds at the B24.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Illegally kicking or batting a loose ball behind the line of scrimmage is enforced 10 yards from the previous spot, and a loss of down.

*Note: Illegally batting or kicking the ball is a 10-yard penalty, and if by Team A, also a loss of down. The one exception is if the foul is by Team A beyond the line of scrimmage, during a scrimmage kick, in which case there is no loss of down. In all other respects, and at all times, the foul is enforced pursuant to normal enforcement principles, based on the type of play during which it occurs (12-5-1, 12-5-2).*

**A.R. 3.26 FUMBLE INTO AND OUT OF END ZONE**

Third-and-7 on A11. A1 fumbles the ball on the A8 where B1 recovers the ball, advances to the A2, where he is hit and fumbles the ball out of bounds through the end zone.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A20. Touchback (3-37, 8-7-3).

**A.R. 3.27 ILLEGAL TOUCH AND MUFFED PUNT INTO END ZONE**

Fourth-and-5 on 50. A1 punts the ball to the B5 where A2 touches the ball. B3 then muffs the ball, and it continues into and out of the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback (3-37, 11-6-1).

**A.R. 3.28 MUFFED SNAP—TRY**

During a kick or 2-point Try, the snap is muffed by holder A2 or QBA1. In attempting to recover, A1 or A2 muffs the ball into the end zone where A5 recovers.

**Ruling:** Try good. Award two points to Team A. Kickoff A35. Since this is a muffed backward pass, it is legal for A5 to recover the ball. Had it been a fumble, only the fumbling player could recover (3-31, 3-40, 8-7-1).

**A.R. 3.29 2-POINT TRY—5 VS. 15**

Before the ball is snapped from the B2 on a 2-point Try, A2 false starts, and B2 then roughs quarterback A1.

**Ruling:** Re-Try B2 and kickoff 50; re-Try B1 and kickoff A35; re-Try B7½ for 1-point Try kick and kickoff A35; or re-Try B15 for 1-point Try kick and kickoff 50 (3-40).

**A.R. 3.30 2-POINT TRY—5 VS. 15**

Before the ball is snapped from the 2-yard line, B1 encroaches and A3 then punches B2.

**Ruling:** Re-Try B17 for 2-point Try; or re-Try B30 for Try kick. In neither case is there an option to enforce Team A's pre-snap foul on the kickoff. Disqualify A3 (3-40).

**A.R. 3.31 BALL HITS INDOOR SCOREBOARD OR SKYCAM - FOUL BY TEAM A ON THE PLAY**

Fourth-and-4 on A30. The game is played in a stadium with a scoreboard gondola hanging from the ceiling, or a Skycam. Back A2 is illegally in motion forward at the snap. The punt is a high kick that hits the scoreboard or Skycam and comes down at the B45 where B1 catches it and returns it to the A15 where he is downed.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-4 on A30. Void the play. The illegal motion foul is declined by rule. The ball is dead (7-2-1-r). Return the game clock to what it read when the ball was snapped, and the clock would start on the snap. (Same ruling on any play. If the ball hits the scoreboard or Skycam, the down is replayed and only personal fouls or unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are enforced, from the previous spot.) This may be reviewed by Replay Official at any time or challenged by either coach outside two minutes of either half.

## **RULE 4 GAME TIMING**

### **GENERAL TIMING RULES**

#### **A.R. 4.1 BETWEEN PERIODS—COACH ON THE FIELD**

During the intermission between the first and second periods, while the Referee and Umpire are preparing to move the ball to the other end of the field, the Referee suddenly discovers Team A's head coach in the middle of the field arguing about the last play of the quarter.

**Ruling:** Penalize Team A 15 yards from the succeeding spot for the coach illegally entering the field. This is a foul if it occurs at any point during the game. Since the coach is being penalized for being on the field, as opposed to what he is saying to the official, (or how he is saying it), this is not the type of foul that counts toward a potential disqualification.

#### **A.R. 4.2 COIN TOSS—CAPTAINS**

At the coin toss: (a) a coach refuses to send any captains to the middle of the field to participate in the coin-toss ceremony; or (b) a coach sends out his entire team to the middle of the field to participate in the ceremony; or (c) a coach sends out his six team captains to the middle of the field to participate in the coin toss. Two of these captains are injured and are not in uniform for this game.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Loss of coin-toss option for both halves and loss of 15 yards from spot of opening kickoff. At least one captain from each team is required to be present for the coin toss.
- (b) Loss of coin-toss option for both halves and loss of 15 yards from spot of opening kickoff. Captains are limited to six per team.
- (c) Legal. A team is limited to six captains: active, inactive, or honorary.

#### **A.R. 4.3 COIN TOSS—INVALID TOSS**

After getting the call from the visiting team captain, the Referee tosses the coin in the air, but it does not turn over before hitting the ground.

**Ruling:** The coin toss is void and another toss is made. The visiting team captain cannot change his original call. If the coin does not turn over, or in the Referee's judgment the toss has been compromised in some way, there will be another toss.

#### **A.R. 4.4 FUMBLE—OUT OF BOUNDS**

Third-and-7 on A45. A2 runs to the 50 and fumbles the ball out of bounds at the A47.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-5 on A47 and the game clock is started on the Referee's signal that a ball has been returned to play (4-3-2).

#### **A.R. 4.5 FUMBLE—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Second-and-10 on B40 with 1:30 left in the game. A1 fumbles at the B36 and the fumble is recovered by A2 at the B34 where he picks up the ball and runs with it.

**Ruling:** Since a teammate other than the fumbling player recovers the fumble after the two-minute warning, the play is blown dead when A2 recovers. Unless there is a significant delay in spotting the ball at the B36, the game clock continues to run, and the play clock begins immediately, as normal. If the ball is not in the vicinity of the B36, and a delay in retrieving and spotting it will create a time disadvantage for either team, the game clock will be stopped, and the play clock frozen. The Referee will re-start the clocks as soon as the ball is retrieved and is being brought back to the B36, and he will quickly advise the quarterback that the clocks are starting.

#### **A.R. 4.6 FUMBLE FORWARD OUT OF BOUNDS—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Second-and-10 on B40 with 1:30 left in the game. A1 fumbles at the B36 and the fumble rolls out of bounds at the B34.

**Ruling:** Third-and-6 on B36. The game clock will stop when the ball rolls out of bounds. It should be restarted by the Referee as the ball is being brought back into the field before it is spotted at the hash mark. (The Referee should advise the quarterback that the game clock will start.) The play clock starts when the play is blown dead and continues to run.

#### **A.R. 4.7 FUMBLE AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING—END ZONE INVOLVEMENT**

Second-and-goal on B6. Thirty seconds remain in the game. A2 takes a handoff behind the line. A2 is tackled at the B4 and fumbles with the ball going into the end zone. A3 recovers the ball in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Third-and-goal on B4. The clock will stop upon the recovery. It should be restarted by the Referee as the ball is being brought back into the field before it is spotted at the hash mark (The Referee should advise the quarterback that the game clock will start.) The play clock starts when the play is blown dead and continues to run. If this same scenario occurs, but the ball is recovered in Team A's end zone, the play is blown dead immediately and results in a safety.

#### **A.R. 4.8 BACKWARD PASS OUT OF BOUNDS—BEFORE TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Second-and-5 on A35. Quarterback A1 throws a backward pass to A3 who muffs the ball at the A32 and the ball goes out of bounds there. Four minutes remain in the second half.

**Ruling:** Third-and-8 on A32. The game clock is stopped when the ball goes out of bounds, but it is restarted by the Referee, before it is spotted, when the new ball is being brought back into the field (advise the quarterback that the clock is being started).

- A.R. 4.9 BACKWARD PASS OUT OF BOUNDS—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**  
Third-and-8 on A30. A1 pitches back to A2 at the A25. A2 muffs the pitch, and the ball goes out of bounds at the A35 with 30 seconds left to play in the second quarter.  
**Ruling:** Fourth-and-13 on A25. **Backward pass out of bounds that conserves time.** A 10 second runoff is applicable if Team B chooses.
- A.R. 4.10 RUNNER OUT OF BOUNDS—FIVE MINUTES OR MORE IN FOURTH QUARTER**  
Third-and-6 on A21. Runner A2 goes out of bounds at the A31 with exactly five minutes (or more) remaining in the fourth quarter.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A31. The game clock is started when an official spots the ball at the inbounds spot, and the Referee gives the signal to start the game clock. If the game clock was at 4:59 when the runner went out of bounds, it would start on the next snap.
- A.R. 4.11 FREE KICK - STARTING GAME CLOCK**  
A free kick occurs at any time of the game.  
**Ruling:** The game clock starts when the ball is legally touched in the field of play, or when the receivers advance the ball from their end zone into the field of play.
- A.R. 4.12 HOLDER FOR FIELD GOAL SACKED—THIRD DOWN—STATUS OF GAME CLOCK**  
Third-and-2 on B15 with the clock stopped with 15 seconds left in the game. Team A, with no timeouts left and behind by two points, decides to attempt a field goal on third down. The ball is snapped to the holder, but he is tackled at the B23 before the kick can be made.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, fourth-and-10 on B23. The game clock continues to run.
- A.R. 4.13 RUNNER IS TACKLED INBOUNDS - DELAY BY THE DEFENSE—TIME EXPIRES IN PERIOD**  
Third-and-10 on B15 with 13 seconds left in the second quarter. A2 catches a pass near the sideline but is tackled inbounds at the B8 with eight seconds left. B1 and B2 lie on A2 not allowing him to get up (0:05). Time runs out in the period.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-goal on B4. Delay of game. Reset the clock to 0:05 and start on the snap.
- A.R. 4.14 GAME AND PLAY CLOCK STOPPED—COACH ATTEMPTS REPLAY CHALLENGE**  
Second-and-2 on B30 with the game clock running. As Team A breaks the huddle, Team B Head Coach throws the red flag to challenge the prior play. The Referee stops both clocks with 14 seconds on the play clock. After discussion with the coach, it is determined that the play is not reviewable, so no challenge is granted, and a timeout is not charged.  
**Ruling:** Second-and-2 on B30. After advising both teams that there are 14 seconds on the play clock and giving them a reasonable opportunity to get ready, the Referee starts the play clock at 14 seconds and winds both clocks.
- A.R. 4.15 GAME CLOCK STOPPED - PLAY CLOCK RUNNING—CHAINS TANGLED**  
Third-and-10 on A45. With the game clock stopped due to an incomplete pass on the prior play, and the play clock running at 28 seconds, the Down Judge stops the game because the chains are tangled and are not set.  
**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on A45. After fixing the chains and advising both teams and giving them a reasonable opportunity to get ready, the Referee starts the play clock at 28 seconds. The game clock starts on the snap.
- A.R. 4.16 PLAY CLOCK INTERRUPTED INSIDE 10 SECONDS—INJURED PLAYER**  
Fourth-and-1 on B35 with 3:33 remaining in the game and the game clock running as T-Formation Quarterback A1 is calling signals, B2 suddenly collapses, apparently injured. The play clock is at seven seconds when the game is stopped for the injured player.  
**Ruling:** Fourth-and-1 on B35. B2 must leave the game (or call a timeout). After B2 leaves the game, and after the Referee has advised both teams and given them a reasonable opportunity to get ready, the Referee resets the play clock to 10 seconds and winds both clocks on the ready for play signal. If a timeout was taken, the play clock would be set to 25 seconds and started on the ready for play signal.
- A.R. 4.17 PLAY CLOCK INTERRUPTED INSIDE 10 SECONDS—INJURED PLAYER—REFEREE DISCRETION**  
Second-and-8 on A35 with 2:45 remaining in the 4th quarter. The game clock is running with Team B out of timeouts and Team A leading 21-20. As T-Formation Quarterback A1 is calling signals, A2 suddenly collapses, apparently injured. The play clock is at :04 and the game clock is at 2:09 when the game is stopped for the injured player.  
**Ruling:** Second-and-8 on A35. Both play clock and game clock will remain at the same time as when the game was stopped. A2 must leave the game (or call a timeout). After A2 leaves the game, and after the Referee has advised both teams and given them reasonable opportunity to get ready, the Referee winds both clocks on the ready for play signal. This prevents time from being added to the play clock that would allow Team A to run the game clock to the two-minute warning. If no such timing advantage exists, the play clock will be set to 10 seconds.
- A.R. 4.18 CLOCK STATUS AFTER BLOCKED FIELD GOAL**  
Third-and-5 on B10. With eight seconds remaining in a tied game, Team A attempts a field goal from the B18. The attempt is blocked, and A1 recovers and is tackled at the B12. Team A has used all of its timeouts.  
**Ruling:** Fourth-and-7 on B12. The clock continues to run and will likely expire, as there has been no change of possession.



**A.R. 4.19 CLOCK STATUS AFTER PUNT—PENALTY TEAM A**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. Team A is in an illegal formation. A1's punt, at 10:00 of the first quarter, rolls dead untouched at the B1.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-15 on A45, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B6. The clock will start on the snap because it was stopped for the change of possession.

**A.R. 4.20 CLOCK STATUS AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION—FOUL ON PLAY**

Second-and-10 on A35. With 8:30 remaining in the third quarter, A1 fumbles the ball at the A30, where it is recovered and downed by B1. B1 was offside on the play.

**Ruling:** A's ball, second-and-5 on A40. The clock starts on the snap, because it was stopped for the change of possession. If there is a change of possession during the down, the game clock will start on the snap, regardless of whether the change of possession is negated by a penalty.

**A.R. 4.21 CLOCK STATUS AFTER FOUL THAT PREVENTS THE SNAP—FOURTH QUARTER OR OVERTIME**

Fourth-and-10 on B45. With 6:00 remaining in the fourth quarter and the clock running, lineman A1 commits a false start.

**Ruling:** A's ball, fourth-and-15 on 50. False start. The clock starts on the snap, because the offense committed a foul that prevented the snap in the fourth quarter. The clock starts on the snap regardless of whether the foul is accepted or declined. A foul is considered to prevent the snap if it is committed after the ball is made ready for play and causes the clock to stop before a snap.

**A.R. 4.22 CLOCK STATUS AFTER DOUBLE FOUL BEFORE THE SNAP—FOURTH QUARTER OR OVERTIME**

Fourth-and-10 on B45. With 6:00 remaining in the fourth quarter and the clock running, lineman A1 commits a false start and defensive lineman B1 comes across the line and forcibly shoves A1 to the ground.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B30. False start and unnecessary roughness. This is a 5-15 enforcement where the false start is disregarded by rule and the unnecessary roughness foul is enforced against Team B. The clock starts on the ready for play because this is not an offensive foul that prevents the snap since the Team B foul is the only foul enforced by rule.

**A.R. 4.23 CLOCK STATUS AFTER DISQUALIFICATION**

First-and-10 on A20. A1 takes a handoff and runs to the A30, where he is tackled. Officials call an impermissible use of helmet foul on tackler B1. After enforcement, and the play clock at 0:17, the Officiating department stops the game and instructs officials to disqualify B1.

**Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on A45. B1 is disqualified. The play clock remains at 0:17 and will start on the Referee's signal.

**A.R. 4.24 FLAG PICKUP—LAST TWO MINUTES—LIVE BALL VERSUS DEAD BALL FOUL**

Third-and-4 on B25. Runner A1 is downed inbounds after a gain of two yards, and (a) during the play or (b) after the play is over the Umpire throws his flag for unnecessary roughness. After discussion with the Referee, the Umpire picks up his flag. The time remaining in the game is 1:06.

**Rulings:** (a) Fourth-and-2 on B23. Reset the play clock to 40 seconds and start the game clock and play clock on the Referee's ready for play signal; or (b) Fourth-and-2 on B23. Freeze the play clock and start on the ready for play signal.

**A.R. 4.25 ONSIDE KICK—NO RETURN—TIMING**

With 0:03 remaining in the fourth quarter, A1 attempts an onside kick from the A35. The kick is immediately caught or recovered legally at the A46: (a) by A2; (b) by B1 who signals for and completes a fair catch; (c) by B1 on his feet and he immediately goes to the ground; (d) by B1 on the ground and he makes no effort to get up or advance; (e) by A2 after first being legally touched by A7 on the A47; or (f) by A2 after first being illegally touched by A7 on the A44.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on A46. 0:03 on the clock. No time runs off the clock.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on A46. 0:03 on the clock. No time runs off the clock.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on A46. 0:02 on the clock. One second runs off the clock.
- (d) B's ball, first-and-10 on A46. 0:02 on the clock. One second runs off the clock.
- (e) A's ball, first-and-10 on A46. The clock starts upon the legal touching by A7, so at least one second will run off the clock.
- (f) B's ball, first-and-10 on A44. 0:03 on the clock. No time runs off the clock, because the ball was not legally touched prior to A's recovery. Team B can take the ball at the spot of the illegal touch, or re-kick with a 5-yard penalty. The penalty cannot be assessed from the dead ball spot because Team A has legal possession at the end of the down.

**INJURY TIMEOUTS**

**A.R. 4.26 TEAM A PLAYER INJURED—EXCESS TIMEOUT**

First-and-10 on B36. Forty seconds remain in the first half. Team A leads 17-14 and has used three timeouts previously in the half. Ball carrier A1 runs to the B31 and is downed inbounds. A2 is injured.

**Ruling:** Second-and-5 on B31. Charge Team A with its fourth timeout, and after the injured player has left the field, run 10 seconds and wind the clock. The play clock is reset to 30 seconds. Team B can decline the runoff, and also has the option to start the clock on the snap. A2 must remain out for one play unless Team B calls a timeout.



**A.R. 4.27 EXCESS TIMEOUT UNDER TWO MINUTES — PREVENTS CLOCK FROM STARTING**

Second-and-3 on B33. A1 runs to the B25, where he is hit and fumbles the ball, which goes out of bounds at the B23 with 50 seconds remaining in the first half. Both teams have used all timeouts. A1 is injured on the play.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B25 (0:40). Charge Team A with its fourth timeout, run 10 seconds and wind the clock when the ball is ready for play. Team B has an option to decline the runoff. A1 must remain out for one play. The excess timeout delays the clock from starting on the ready for play once the ball is returned inbounds, so there is a 10-second runoff (4-5-4, Note 3).

**A.R. 4.28 TEAM REQUESTS FOURTH TIMEOUT — IGNORED**

Prior to the two-minute warning of either half, Team A gains 15 yards and a first down and is tackled inbounds at the B40. Team A had previously used three timeouts and requests a fourth timeout.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B40. The request for a timeout is ignored. If the timeout is incorrectly granted, it will count as Team A's fourth timeout, Team A will be penalized five yards for delay of game, and the game clock will be started on the ready for play.

**A.R. 4.29 FIFTH TIMEOUT CHARGED — TEAM B**

Third-and-4 on B22. Forty seconds remain in the game. A1 throws an incomplete pass. B1 is injured and Team B had previously used four team timeouts in the half.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B17. Charge Team B with their fifth team timeout which requires a five-yard penalty. Set the play clock to 40 seconds, and the game clock starts on the snap, because of the incomplete pass. B1 is suspended for one play.

**A.R. 4.30 TEAM A OR B PLAYER INJURED—EXCESS TIMEOUT—FIFTH**

Third-and-2 on B17. A1 runs to the B15 and is downed inbounds with 30 seconds remaining in the game. (a) A2 or (b) B2 is injured on the play. The score is tied, and both teams have used four timeouts previously in the half.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-15 on B20. Charge Team A with their fifth timeout. Five-yard penalty, run 10, and start the clock on the ready for play signal.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-5 on B10. Charge Team B with their fifth timeout. Five-yard penalty. Set the play clock to 40, and start the clock on the ready for play unless **Team A chooses to start the clock on the snap**.

**Note:** A fifth injury time out is a foul between downs, so it does not offset with other fouls, and it is enforced after the chains are set. If the clock was running at the end of the previous down: if an A player was injured, Team B has the option to run 10 and, if so, the clock will start on the ready for play. If a B player was injured, the play clock is set to 40, and the game clock is started as if the excess timeout had not occurred, **unless Team A chooses to start it on the snap**.

**A.R. 4.31 INJURY CAUSED BY FOUL**

Second-and-7 on B15. A1 runs to the B12 and is tripped on the tackle by B2. There is 0:55 left in the game. Team A had previously used three timeouts in the half, and A1 is injured on the play.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-goal on B6. There is not a charged timeout or a 10 second runoff, because the injury was caused by a foul. A1 can remain in the game. The game clock starts on the snap because of the foul.

**A.R. 4.32 CLOCK STOPPED BY FOUL/CHANGE OF POSSESSION—INJURY ON PLAY**

Fourth-and-10 on B20. Twenty seconds remain in the game with the clock running. Team A has no timeouts remaining and is behind 21-17. At the snap: (a) Team A; or (b) Team B is offside, and A1 runs to the B17 and is downed inbounds. A2 is injured and attendants must enter the field.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and 10 on B17. Team B will decline A's offside. There is no timeout charged (due to the change of possession). A2 must leave the game for one play unless a team timeout is taken.
- (b) Fourth-and-5 on B15. Team A is charged their fourth timeout because the final ruling, after enforcement of the foul, is not a change of possession. There is no 10-second runoff, however, because the clock stopped for the apparent change of possession and because there was a foul on the play. A2 must leave the game for one play, and the game clock will start on the snap.

**A.R. 4.33 INJURY AND LIVE BALL / DEAD BALL FOUL ON PLAY**

First-and-10 on B20. Twenty seconds remain in the game and Team A is behind 21-20. A2 take a handoff and is tackled at the B15 with :15 remaining. A4 is injured on the play, and Team A is out of timeouts. (a) Either team was called for a live ball foul during the play, (b) Team B committed a dead ball foul for unnecessary roughness after the play, or (c) Team A committed a dead ball foul for unnecessary roughness after the play.

**Rulings:**

- (a) The penalty for the live ball foul is enforced and Team A is charged with an excess timeout for injury. The live Ball foul prevents a 10 second runoff that would normally accompany the excess timeout by Team A. A4 must leave the game for one play, and the game clock starts on the snap.
- (b) First-and-Goal on B 7 ½. Team A is charged with an excess timeout for injury. The dead ball foul by Team B prevents a 10 second runoff that would normally accompany the excess timeout by Team A. A4 must leave the game for one play, and the game clock starts on the snap because of the foul.
- (c) Second-and-20 on B30. Team A is charged with an excess timeout for injury and a 10 second runoff is applicable both because of the injury and the dead ball foul that conserves time. A4 must leave the game for one play, and the game clock starts on the ready for play.

**A.R. 4.34 CLOCK RUNNING—TEAM A INJURY ON PLAY**

Fourth-and-2 on B20. Twenty seconds remain in the game with the clock running. Team A has one timeout remaining and is behind 21-17. A1 runs to the B17 and is downed inbounds. A2 is injured and attendants must enter the field.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B17. Charge Team A with its final timeout. There is no runoff, and A2 can remain in the game, because of the charged timeout. (There is no option to run 10 seconds instead of using the timeout.)

**A.R. 4.35 TEAM TIMEOUT AND INJURY TO OPPONENT**

Third-and-10 on B40. A1 runs to the B25 where he is tackled inbounds with 30 seconds left in the game. Team A calls timeout, and significantly later, B1 drops to the ground, injured. Trainers come on and assist B1 off the field.  
**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B25. Team A is charged with the timeout. Team B is not charged with a timeout unless B's injury occurred after the ready for play signal had been given for the next down. B1 could remain in the game, due to the charged team timeout.

**A.R. 4.36 INJURIES—TEAM A AND TEAM B**

First-and-10 on A41. Thirty seconds remain in the game. A1 runs to the B40, where he is tackled inbounds. A3 and B4 are both injured on the play.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B40. Charge each team with a timeout; the play clock is set to 25 seconds; and the game clock is started with the snap, unless both timeouts were excess, in which case the clock starts on the ready for play signal. No excess timeout fouls are enforced and there can be no 10-second runoff. If either team had a timeout left, it is used, thus allowing both players to remain in the game.

**A.R. 4.37 INJURIES—TEAM A AND TEAM B**

Thirty seconds remain in the game. A1 is injured and charged with a timeout. B2 is injured downfield but discovered significantly after Team A was charged with the injury timeout.

**Ruling:** Team A and Team B are both charged with injury timeouts. Both players would be allowed to stay in the game. No excess timeout fouls are enforced.

**A.R. 4.38 INJURIES—TWO PLAYERS FROM SAME TEAM**

Third-and-3 on A35 in the third quarter. Quarterback A1 throws a pass over the middle to the 50. B1 and B2 are both hurt and helped by trainers. An injury timeout is taken for Team B. B1 gets up on his own. B2 is carried off the field.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on 50. Both B1 and B2 must leave for one play or take a team timeout.

**A.R. 4.39 INJURY—AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION/TOUCHDOWN**

Second-and 10 on B25. With 1:10 remaining in the fourth quarter, A1's pass is (a) intercepted by B2 and returned to the 50, or (b) caught by A2 for a touchdown. A3 is injured on the play, and trainers come on the field after the play to attend to him.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Due to the change of possession, Team A is not charged with an injury timeout.
- (b) Touchdown Team A. Due to the touchdown, Team A is not charged with an injury timeout.

**Note:** In either case, A3 must go out for a play, unless a team timeout is taken.

**A.R. 4.40 INJURY—AFTER FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT**

Fourth-and-15 on B25. With 1:35 remaining in the fourth quarter, A1's field goal attempt from the B32 is: (a) good; (b) blocked, recovered by B2, and returned for a touchdown; or (c) blocked and recovered behind the line by A2 who runs and is downed at the B5. B3 is injured on the play, and trainers come on the field after the play to attend to him.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Because of the successful field goal, no injury timeout is charged to Team B. B3 must go out for one play.
- (b) Because of either the change of possession or touchdown, no injury timeout is charged to Team B. B3 must go out for one play.
- (c) A's ball, first-and-goal on B5. Team B is charged a timeout because there was no change of possession. B3 may stay in the game because of the charged timeout.

**A.R. 4.41 INJURY—PLAY CLOCK EXPIRES AT TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Third-and-1 on B45. Quarterback A1 tries a sneak and is legally tackled at the line of scrimmage for no gain and is injured on the play. The Referee signals timeout and the clock is stopped at exactly 2:25 in the fourth quarter. Substitute quarterback A2 enters the game and the Referee winds both clocks. However, quarterback A2 allows the play clock to run down to :00, with the game clock showing 2:00.

**Ruling:** Two-minute warning. No foul for a delay as long as the play clock and game clock are on the same second, even if one is slightly off the other. The injured player (A1) may return after the two-minute warning.

**A.R. 4.42 SUCCESSIVE TIMEOUTS—INJURED PLAYER RETURNS**

Second-and-14 on B40 (third quarter). A2 runs to the B35 where he is downed, and he is hurt on the play. The Referee takes an injury timeout for A2. After two minutes, the Referee declares the ball ready for play after A2 is removed from the game. Team B then calls a timeout. The Referee grants a 30-second timeout. After the timeout, Team A calls a timeout, and A2 re-enters the game.

**Ruling:** A's ball, third-and-9 on B35. Successive timeouts by each team are legal and A2 may return after either Team A's or Team B's timeout.

**A.R. 4.43 FOUL NEGATES CHANGE OF POSSESSION - INJURY**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. With Team A trailing 23-17, and 0:35 remaining in the fourth quarter, A1's pass falls incomplete. Defensive pass interference is called at the B10 on the play. While the foul is being reported to the Referee, he notices attendants have come on the field because Tackle A3 was hurt at the line of scrimmage.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-goal on B10. Team A is charged an injury timeout because the final ruling, after enforcement of the foul, is not a change of possession. Injury timeouts are determined after all aspects of the play are considered – including fouls or replay reviews. Tackle A3 may stay in the game because of the charged timeout.

**A.R. 4.44 FOUL NEGATES TOUCHDOWN - INJURY**

Third-and-10 on 50. With 0:35 remaining in the fourth quarter, Team A has previously been charged with four timeouts. The pass is complete to A2 for a touchdown. Offensive pass interference is called on the play. While the foul is being reported to the Referee, he notices attendants have come on the field because Tackle A3 was hurt at the line of scrimmage.

**Ruling:** A's ball, third-and-25 on A35. Team A is charged their fifth excess timeout because the final ruling, after enforcement of the foul, is not a score. The fifth excess timeout is enforced as a foul between downs and enforced after the offensive pass interference penalty. There is no ten second runoff because there was a foul during the play and because there was an apparent score. Tackle A3 must leave the game for one play because there has been no charged team timeout. Injury timeouts are determined after all aspects of the player are considered – including fouls or replay reviews.

**A.R. 4.45 TIMEOUT RESTORED AFTER INJURY - AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

First-and-10 on A40. With 1:23 remaining in a tied game, A1 slides down at the A48 where he jumps up and calls a timeout, which is granted. After the Referee announces the timeout, it is discovered that B1 was injured on the play, and Team B trainers have already come on the field, or thereafter come on the field, to assist B1.

**Ruling:** Second-and-2 on A48. Team A's timeout is restored, and Team B is charged with a timeout. If it is an excess timeout, B1 must leave for 1 play, the play clock is set to :40, and the game clock starts on the ready **unless Team A chooses to have it start on the snap**. If Team B has remaining timeouts, they are charged a timeout (or if Team A still wants a charged timeout), in which case, B1 can remain in the game, the play clock is set to :25, and the game clock starts on the snap.

**A.R. 4.46 FIFTH TIMEOUT—TEAM B**

Third-and-4 on B22, with 40 seconds remaining in a tied game. Runner A2 is tackled inbounds at the B23. B1 is injured and Team B has already been charged with their 4th timeout for a prior injury.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B18. Charge Team B with their fifth team timeout which requires a five-yard penalty. Set the play clock to 40 seconds, and the game clock starts on the ready **unless Team A chooses to start it on the snap**. B1 must leave the game for one play.

**A.R. 4.47 FIFTH TIMEOUT—TEAM B—LIVE BALL FOUL BY TEAM A**

Third-and-10 on B20, with 40 seconds remaining in a tied game. Wideout A2 is not on the line of scrimmage at the snap, leaving only 6 offensive players on the line. QBA1 throws an incomplete pass, and B2 is injured on the play. Team B has already been charged with their 4th timeout for a prior injury.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-5 on B15. These fouls do not offset; each are enforced separately. Team B will likely decline the illegal formation foul, making it fourth-and-10. The fifth time out for an injury requires a 5-yard penalty against Team B, which is assessed regardless of clock status. The play clock is set to 40 seconds. The game clock starts on the snap, because of the incomplete pass, as well as the illegal formation penalty. B2 must leave the game for one play unless a timeout is called.

**ACTIONS THAT CONSERVE TIME AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

**A.R. 4.48 FALSE START**

Second-and-5 on B15. The score is tied with 15 seconds remaining in the game and the game clock running. Team A is set at the line of scrimmage and A3 false starts. Quarterback A1 spikes the ball in front of him to stop the clock. Team A has: (a) used its three timeouts; or (b) has one remaining timeout.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-10 on B20. Penalize five yards and run 10 seconds off the clock, because the false start by A3 stopped the game clock prior to the action of the quarterback. The clock starts on the ready for play signal.
- (b) Second-and-10 on B20. Penalize five yards, but if Team A chooses, it can prevent the 10-second runoff by using its final timeout. The clock starts on the snap, if Team A takes its last timeout.

**A.R. 4.49 FALSE START—TEAM B OFFSIDE**

Third-and-6 on B15. Twenty-five seconds remain in the game and the clock is running. Team A is set at the line of scrimmage with B1 still in the offensive backfield. A5's false start kills the play. Team A has already used its timeouts.

**Ruling:** Third-and-11 on B20. Penalize only the false start (7-4-2). There is a 10-second runoff, if Team B chooses, in which case the clock starts on the ready for play signal.

**A.R. 4.50 TWELVE MEN IN TEAM A HUDDLE**

Second-and-5 on B15. Fifty-five seconds remain in the first half and Team A is behind in the score. Team A has been hurrying to get off as many plays as possible during the drive, although they have been briefly huddling between plays. Team A is flagged for 12 men in the offensive huddle. Team A has used its three timeouts.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on B20. Run 10 seconds if Team B chooses. **This action causes the clock to stop during a dead ball period, so it is an action that conserves time.**

- A.R. 4.51 NOT ALL OFFENSIVE PLAYERS SET BEFORE SNAP—CLOCK RUNNING AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**  
 Second-and-10 on B35. The score is tied, the clock is running, and: (a) 50 seconds; or (b) 1:50 remains in the game. As Team A hurries to the line, the ball is snapped before tailback A2 gets set. A1 gets sacked at the B41. Team A has already used its three timeouts.  
**Rulings:**  
 (a) and (b) Second-and-15 on B40. False start. Run 10 seconds off the game clock, if Team B chooses, and the clock starts on the ready for play signal. When all 11 offensive players do not get set simultaneously prior to the snap, and the game clock is running after the two-minute warning of the half, the illegal shift converts to a false start, and the play must be shut down immediately. If all 11 players get set, and then two players shift without resetting prior to the snap, it is a live ball foul for an illegal shift, and there is no runoff.
- A.R. 4.52 BACK FAILS TO SET BEFORE SNAP—CLOCK STOPPED**  
 Second-and-10 on B35. The score is tied, the clock is stopped due to an incomplete pass on the prior play. There are 50 seconds remaining in the game. As Team A goes up to the line, the ball is snapped before tailback A2 gets set. Team A has already used its three timeouts. A1's pass falls incomplete.  
**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on B35 or second-and-15 on B40. Since the clock was stopped at the snap, the "conserving time rules" are not in effect. It is an illegal shift, rather than a false start, because the clock was not running, so the foul does not prevent the snap. The clock starts on the snap for the next play.
- A.R. 4.53 PLAYERS MOVING AT THE SNAP**  
 Third-and-10 on B30. With the clock running any time during the game, all members of the offense get fully set for one second, but as the ball is snapped: (a) left guard A2, (b) tight end A3, (c) wingback A5, (d) or tailback A6, is going from a two-point stance to a three-point stance, or is rolling forward, when the ball is snapped; or when the ball is snapped, (e) wide receiver A4, after coming set, is moving from off the line of scrimmage up to the line of scrimmage, or from on the line of scrimmage to off the line of scrimmage, (not an abrupt motion), or (f) wide receiver A4 is clearly off the line of scrimmage and moves forward to a position that is still clearly off the line of scrimmage. A1's pass falls incomplete.  
**Rulings:** (a), (b), (c), (d), (e): Third-and-15 on B35. False start. If it occurs after the two-minute warning of either half, there is also the potential for a 10-second runoff.  
 (f) Fourth-and-10 on B30, or third-and-15 on B35. Illegal motion (7-4-8).
- A.R. 4.54 ILLEGAL FORMATION—NO 10-SECOND RUNOFF**  
 Second-and-3 on B42. Fifty seconds remain in the game. Team A is in a hurry-up offense. The ball is snapped and the runner is downed on the B15. Team A had only six men on the line of scrimmage, but all 11 players were in close proximity to the line of scrimmage.  
**Ruling:** Second-and-8 on B47. No 10-second runoff since A's penalty did not prevent the snap. The clock starts on the snap.
- A.R. 4.55 DELAY OF GAME BY TEAM A—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**  
 Third-and-10 on B45. Fifty seconds remain in the game and Team A is behind in the score. A1 gets confused on what play to call and Team A is called for delay of game.  
**Ruling:** Third-and-15 on 50. There is no 10-second runoff, because this type of delay of game by Team A is not an action that conserves time. The clock starts on the snap.
- A.R. 4.56 ILLEGAL SHIFT/MOTION—TEAM B OFFSIDE—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**  
 Second-and-10 on B35. With 0:50 remaining in a tied game, Team A is in a hurry-up offense and B1 is set and lined up offside. (a) Back A2 never gets set before the ball is snapped; or (b) back A2 gets set but then goes in motion and is moving toward the line of scrimmage at the snap. QBA1 spikes the ball.  
**Rulings:**  
 (a) Second-and-15 on B40; 10-second runoff. The illegal shift converts to a false start, and the play is blown dead immediately after the snap. There is no foul for offside since there was no legal snap.  
 (b) Second-and-10 on B35. Let the play go through, and the penalties offset.
- A.R. 4.57 BACKWARD PASS OUT OF BOUNDS—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**  
 Third-and-8 on B28. A1 runs to the B20 and sees he is about to be tackled, so he throws the ball backward toward the sideline with no teammate in position to catch the pass. The ball hits B2 and rolls out of bounds at the B15. There was 1:20 left in the fourth quarter when the ball was snapped.  
**Ruling:** Fourth-and-5 on B25. Since the ball went out of bounds (spot of the foul) in advance of the spot of the backward pass (the basic spot), enforce from the spot of the backward pass (Rule 8-7-7). It is a loss of down, and ten seconds would be run off the clock, if the defense so chooses, and wind the clock. If a 10-second runoff is declined, the game clock will start on the snap.
- A.R. 4.58 BACKWARD PASS OUT OF BOUNDS—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**  
 Third-and-10 on B30. Fifty seconds remain in a tied game, and Team A is out of timeouts, A1 runs the ball to the B14 where he throws a backward pass out of bounds. The ball goes out of bounds at the B21.  
**Ruling:** Fourth-and-6 on B26 with a 10-second runoff, if B elects, and the clock starts on the ready for play signal. The penalty is enforced from the out of bounds spot (the spot of the foul) because it is behind the spot of the backward pass (the basic spot). This is a three-and-one enforcement.

**A.R. 4.59 BACKWARD PASS OUT OF BOUNDS—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Second-and-20 on 50. With 1:30 remaining in the fourth quarter, A1 scrambles, and while at the A40, throws the ball backward and out of bounds at the A35. Team A has already used its three timeouts.

**Ruling:** Option for Team B: Third-and-35 on A35. The penalty is declined, so there is no 10-second runoff, (and the clock is on the snap); or **third**-and-25 on A45 with a 10-second runoff, and wind the clock. This is a three-and-one enforcement (Rule 8-7-7). If either the spot of the backward pass (basic spot) or the spot where the ball went out of bounds (spot of the foul) is behind the line of scrimmage, the foul is enforced from the previous spot (Rule 14-3-6). Team B would need to accept enforcement of the penalty from the previous spot in order for the 10-second runoff to be applicable, but they also have the option of declining the penalty for a more advantageous yardage situation with no 10 second runoff.

**A.R. 4.60 TEAM B THROWS BALL OUT OF BOUNDS AFTER INTERCEPTION**

Third-and-10 on B45. Twenty-five seconds remain in a tied game. A1's pass is intercepted by B2 at the B30. As B2 returns the interception, he sees that time is about to expire, so when he is at the A25, he throws a forward pass out of bounds to stop the clock with 12 seconds left.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A30. This is an illegal forward pass which requires a 5-yard penalty from the spot of the pass. There is no 10-second runoff, as the change of possession results in a stopped clock. This is not an action that conserves time. The clock starts on the snap.

**A.R. 4.61 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Third-and-20 on 50. There is 1:35 remaining in a tied game, and Team A is out of timeouts. A1 drops back to pass, and at the A35 intentionally grounds the pass to avoid a sack.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-35 on A35. Team B has the option of accepting the foul and declining the 10-second runoff or accepting the foul and the 10-second runoff as would be the normal enforcement. If the runoff is declined, the game clock starts on the snap. If it is accepted, the game clock will start on the ready for play signal.

*Note: It is never possible to decline a foul and still have a 10-second runoff.*

**A.R. 4.62 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—INSIDE OF TWO MINUTES—ADDITIONAL FOUL ON PLAY**

Third-and-10 on B20. 2nd quarter 1:45. QBA1 is going to be sacked at the B31 in the pocket so he throws the ball into the ground with no eligible receiver in the area. A3 dragged down B3 during the play (1:38).

**Ruling:** A's ball, fourth-and-21 on B31. Loss of down for intentional grounding, but there is no 10-second runoff, and the game clock will start on the snap. Because the additional foul for offensive holding would result in the clock starting on the snap regardless of whether it is accepted or declined, there is no 10-second runoff for the intentional grounding, or any other illegal act that conserves time.

**A.R. 4.63 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—INTERCEPTION AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Third-and-10 on B45. The score is tied with 1:05 in the fourth quarter. A1 is pressured in the pocket at the A43, and to avoid a sack, throws the ball deep down the left side. There are no eligible A players in the area, although B1 intercepts at the B2 and runs out of bounds there with 0:45 on the clock. Team A is out of timeouts.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B2. The clock is at 0:45 and would start on the snap. Or, A's ball, fourth-and-22 on A43. Run 10 seconds if B chooses. Set the game clock to 0:35 and wind.

*Note: To keep the ball, Team B would have to decline the penalty.*

**A.R. 4.64 SAFETY—INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—NO 10-SECOND RUNOFF**

Third-and-10 on A8. Thirteen seconds remain in the game and Team A trails 17-14. QBA1 backpedals into his end zone, and from the pocket, throws the ball into an area with no eligible receiver. There are 8 seconds left on the game clock.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick from the A20. There is no 10-second runoff because the foul results in a score.

**A.R. 4.65 ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Third-and-5 on B31. With 10 seconds remaining in the game, and Team B ahead, QBA1 scrambles to his right and throws a pass toward end A2 who is in the end zone. The pass is deflected by B1 and falls incomplete. The ball was thrown from the: (a) B30; (b) B32 after A1 had advanced to the B30 and returned behind the line of scrimmage; or (c) B32 after first throwing a pass from the B36 that B3 deflected back to A1, who caught the ball at the B36 and scrambled to the B32.

**Rulings:** In (a), (b), and (c), 10-second runoff; game over.

*Note: After the two-minute warning of either half, an illegal pass is considered illegally conserving time, and a 10-second runoff is an option.*

**A.R. 4.66 DEAD BALL FOUL THAT CONSERVES TIME**

There are twelve seconds remaining in the game, and Team A is out of timeouts and trails by one point. A1 catches a long pass and is downed at the B12 with four seconds remaining on the clock. A1 (a) commits a dead ball foul for unnecessary roughness; or (b) takes his helmet off (not as part of an injury).

**Rulings:**

(a) Unnecessary roughness A1; 10-second runoff; game over.

(b) Unsportsmanlike conduct A1; 10-second runoff; game over.



**A.R. 4.67 DEFENSIVE FOUL THAT PREVENTS THE SNAP — AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Third-and-10 on 50. Team A leads 24-21 with 1:50 remaining in the game and the clock is running. B1: (a) slaps the ball out of center A2's hands; or (b) misjudges the snap count and encroaches.

**Rulings:** Third-and-5 on the B45 in both (a) and (b). Set the play clock to 40 and start the game clock on the ready for play signal, because the game clock was running after the two-minute warning and Team B committed a foul that conserves time. Team A also has the option to start the clock on the snap.

**A.R. 4.68 DEFENSIVE FOUL OR INJURY UNDER 40 SECONDS OF HALF**

Third-and-10 on 50. A2 takes a handoff and is tackled inbounds at the B45 with :32 remaining in either half. B1: (a) commits unnecessary roughness after the play or (b) is injured. Both teams are out of timeouts.

**Rulings:**

- (a) First-and-10 on B30. Team A can choose for the half to be over or to set the play clock to 40 seconds and start the game clock on the snap.
- (b) Fourth-and-5 on B45. Team A can choose for the half to be over or to set the play clock to 40 seconds and start the game clock on the snap.

***Note:** If there is a foul that conserves time or an excess timeout for injury inside 2-minutes of a half with the game clock running, the opponent can choose to start the clock on the snap. If either occurs under 40 seconds of a half by the defense, the offense can also choose to end the half.*

**A.R. 4.69 TIME OUT MISTAKENLY GRANTED – AFTER TWO MINUTE WARNING**

Third-and-10 on B30. The clock is running with 1:50 left in the game, and as the QB approaches the line, (a) A1, or (b) B1, suddenly calls timeout, and the Referee forgets that they have already used their three timeouts in the half and mistakenly grants the timeout.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Third-and-15 on B35, run 10 seconds off the game clock, set the play clock to 30, and start the game clock on the ready for play. Team A has committed a foul that stops the clock after the two-minute warning. (Team B could choose to decline the runoff and start the clock on the snap.)
- (b) Third-and-5 on B25. Set the play clock to 40 seconds and start the game clock on the ready if Team A chooses. Team B committed a foul that stops the clock after the two-minute warning.

**A.R. 4.70 SECOND TIMEOUT IN SAME DEAD BALL PERIOD UNDER TWO MINUTES**

Third-and-10 on B40. With 1:30 remaining in a tied game, A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B31. After the officials measure, Team A is short of the line to gain, and Team A calls its first timeout of the half (1:20). As Team A lines up in a scrimmage formation, Team B calls its first timeout. As both teams line up after Team B's timeout, QBA1 realizes that there are only 10 players on offense and signals for a timeout, which the Umpire grants.

**Ruling:** A's ball, fourth-and-6 on B36. Delay of game and Team A is charged its second timeout of the half. When a second timeout in the same dead ball period is erroneously granted, there is a 5-yard penalty, and the timeout is also charged. There is no 10-second runoff because the clock was stopped.

**EXTENSION OF PERIODS**

**A.R. 4.71 TOO MANY TEAM A PLAYERS ON FIELD ON PUNT—LAST PLAY OF HALF**

Fourth-and-5 on A25. Team A is leading 21-17 with three seconds remaining in the game. Team A lines up in punt formation with 12 players on the field. A1 punts the ball to B1 at the B30 who returns it to the A40. Time runs out.

**Ruling:** B 1-10-A35, extend for an untimed down. The officials should shut this play down before the snap and enforce 5 yards, (no 10 second runoff). But because the officials let the play go on, the penalty is enforced as a foul during the down. Since this foul by the kicking team on a punt can be enforced from the end of the play, the period is extended if Team B so chooses.

**A.R. 4.72 OFFENSIVE FOUL ON PUNT—FIRST TOUCH—LAST PLAY OF HALF**

Fourth-and-10 on A30. With eight seconds remaining in the game and Team B down by one point, Team A lines up to punt. Team B rushes 11 players, but A1 gets off a good punt to the B10 where A2 downs it. Just after the snap, A3 head-slaps B2. Time expires on the play.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B25. Enforce the personal foul from the dead ball spot and extend for an untimed down. Even without the head slap, the half could be extended from the B10 due to the first touch by A2.

**A.R. 4.73 OFFENSIVE FOUL ON MISSED FIELD GOAL —LAST PLAY**

Fourth-and-10 on B30. On the last play in the 4th quarter of a tied game, A1 attempts a field goal from the B38. A2 and A3 illegally chop block B1 on the play. The field goal attempt is short and: (a) hits in the end zone or goes through the back of the end zone; or (b) is caught by B2 in the end zone or field of play and returned to the B40.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A47. Extend for an untimed down. All fouls by the kicking team can be bridged over on missed field goals, which would allow an extension.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Extend for an untimed down. The rationale is the same as above.

**A.R. 4.74 OFFENSIVE FOUL PRIOR TO INTERCEPTION—LAST PLAY**

Third-and-10 on 50. The score is tied with three seconds left in the first half. A1 drops back to pass, and as B1 rushes the passer, tackle A2 puts his hand on B1's facemask and: (a) continues to push B1's head back without grasping the mask; or (b) twists B1's facemask. A1 then throws a pass which is intercepted by B2 and returned to the A16.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Half over. The illegal hands penalty by A2 is not carried over, so there is no opportunity for an extension.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-goal on A8. Extend for an untimed down, since the facemask is a personal foul, so it is carried over and enforced from the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 4.75 OFFENSIVE FOUL PRIOR TO PUNT AND CHANGE OF POSSESSION—LAST PLAY OF HALF**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. With 0:10 remaining in the first half, A1's punt is caught by B1 at the B15 and returned to the B30, where he fumbles. A2 recovers the loose ball at the B35, and time expires on the play. Team A was in an illegal formation at the snap.

**Ruling:** Half over. The foul for illegal formation can only be enforced at the previous spot with Team A still in possession, so there is no extension. If Team B had possession at the end of the down, the foul could be enforced from the dead ball spot and Team B could elect to extend the period for an untimed down.

**A.R. 4.76 DOUBLE FOUL—INTERCEPTION—LAST PLAY OF QUARTER OR HALF**

First-and-10 on 50. A1 is illegally in motion. B1 is offside at the snap. B2 intercepts the pass and is downed on the B40. On the play, time expires in the: (a) first quarter; or (b) either half.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Quarter over. Replay the down to begin the second quarter. The 1st or 3rd quarters are not extended when there are double fouls.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Replay the down and extend.

**A.R. 4.77 DOUBLE FOUL—INTERCEPTION—LAST PLAY OF HALF—TEAM B FOUL UPFRONT**

First-and-10 on 50. B1 is offside at the snap, and the pass is then intercepted by B2. During the interception return, A1 tackles B2 by the facemask. Time in the half expires on the play.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Replay and extend for an untimed down.

**A.R. 4.78 DOUBLE FOUL WITH A CHANGE—LAST PLAY OF HALF—TEAM A FOUL UPFRONT**

First-and-10 on 50. **Before the change of possession, A1 (a) holds** or (b) commits an unnecessary roughness foul. B1 intercepts the pass and during the return B2 clips. Time in the half expires on the play.

**Ruling:** Both (a) and (b): Half over. There is no extension for a double foul with a change of possession that does not involve a replay of the down. **Although the foul for unnecessary roughness would bridge the change of possession and offset with the Team B foul, in this situation, because of the Team A major foul upfront, it is still considered a double foul with a change of possession and there is no extension of the half.**

**A.R. 4.79 DOUBLE FOUL WITH A CHANGE—PUNT—LAST PLAY OF HALF**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. With six seconds remaining in the fourth quarter of a tied game, Team A's scrimmage kick is fielded by B1 at the B25 and returned to the A15. Prior to the ball being kicked, A4 and A10 chop blocked B4, and during the kick, B5 held A5 at the B40. Time ran out on the play.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-10 on 50, extend; or go to overtime. On a double foul with a change of possession on a kicking play, Team B has the option to replay the down and extend the half.

**A.R. 4.80 DOUBLE FOUL AFTER A CHANGE—LAST PLAY OF HALF**

Second-and-10 on A30. B1 intercepts a pass at the 50 on the last play of the first half. On the runback, A2 blocks B3 low at A30. After B1 is tackled at the A20, B3 shoves A2 to the ground.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A20. Extend the period by an untimed down, and the fouls offset at the spot of B's foul (the dead ball spot in this case). The half is extended for a double foul after a change of possession unless the team last on defense's only foul is a dead ball foul.

**A.R. 4.81 DOUBLE FOUL AFTER A CHANGE—LAST PLAY OF HALF – TEAM A LIVE/DEAD BALL FOUL**

Fourth-and-12 on 50. On the last play of the second quarter, A1 punts from the A40. B1 fields the punt at the B10 and returns it to the B30. During the return, B2 held at the B20 and A4 a) tripped B2 to make the tackle or b) piled on B2 after he was down.

**Rulings:** (a) B's ball first-and-10 on B20. Extend for an untimed down. This is a double/after with the defense (Team A) committing a live ball foul; (b) Half over. The unsportsmanlike conduct foul by A4 is carried over to the second half kickoff (or overtime if the play occurred in the fourth quarter). This is a "Clean Hands End of Half" because the defense (Team A) did not commit a live ball foul before the end of the half. In this case, the offense's (Team B) foul is disregarded because it was not a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct. If the offense's (Team B) foul was a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct, the half would be over, and the fouls would offset immediately.

**A.R. 4.82 LAST PLAY OF GAME—DOUBLE FOUL—DEAD BALL FOUL BY OFFENSE**

Second-and-goal at B4. With 0:03 remaining in the game, and Team B leading 21-14, A1 pitches to A2 who runs wide and is tackled at the B1. B4 tackles A1 by the facemask, and A1 gets up and shoves B4 to the ground.

**Rulings:** Second-and-goal at B4. Extend for an untimed down. Live ball and dead ball fouls combine to create double fouls. The half is extended because the defense committed a live ball foul.

**A.R. 4.83 LAST PLAY OF GAME—5 VS. 15—MAJOR DEAD BALL FOUL BY DEFENSE AND CLEAN HANDS END OF HALF**

Second-and-goal at B1. With 0:03 remaining in the game, and Team B leading 21-14, A1 runs and is tackled at the B1. Team A had six men on the line, and B2: (a) piled on late after the tackle; or (b) stood over and taunted A1.



**Rulings:** (a) and (b): Game over. The half is not extended because this is a 5 vs. 15 with the major foul being a dead ball by the defense and also because this is a “Clean Hands End of Half.”

**Note:** *If the game had been tied, the dead ball personal foul or UNS would be enforced on the overtime kickoff.*

**A.R. 4.84 LAST PLAY OF TIED GAME—DOUBLE FOUL—MAJOR DEAD BALL FOUL BY DEFENSE**

Second-and-5 on 50. On the last play of the game with the score tied, A1 runs to the B10. (a) Team A was in an illegal formation; or (b) A2 held during the play; or (c) A2 grabbed and twisted B1’s facemask. After A1 is tackled, B1 piles on or taunts.

**Rulings:**

- (a) There is no extension. Go to overtime. The illegal formation penalty is disregarded by 5 vs. 15 rule, and the dead ball personal foul or UNS by B1 will be enforced on the overtime kickoff.
- (b) Half over, no extension. Team B did not foul before the end of the half (“Clean Hands End of Half”), so there is no extension. Team A’s holding foul is disregarded and Team B’s dead ball personal foul or UNS is carried over to the kickoff in overtime.
- (c) Half over, no extension. Team B did not foul before the end of the half (“Clean Hands End of Half”), so there is no extension. Team A’s live ball personal foul offsets with Team B’s dead ball personal foul at the end of the down.

**A.R. 4.85 5 VS. 15—LAST PLAY OF TIED GAME—MAJOR FOUL ON OFFENSE**

Second-and-5 on 50. On the last play of the game with the score tied, A1 runs to the B10. A2 cracked back at the B48, and B1 was offside on the play.

**Ruling:** No extension. Go to overtime. 5 vs. 15 with the major foul on the offense. Team A’s live ball personal foul is not enforced on the overtime kickoff.

**A.R. 4.86 DOUBLE FOUL—LAST PLAY OF GAME**

Fourth-and-5 on A25. Team A is leading 21-17 with three seconds remaining in the game. Team A is in an illegal formation, and A1 punts the ball to B1 at the A45 where he signals for a fair catch. B1 muffs the punt, and as the ball is rolling at the 50, B1 blocks A2 low at the A48. A3 recovers, and time runs out on the play.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-5 on A25. Extend for an untimed down. Offsetting fouls with no post-possession.

**Note:** *There is no 5 vs. 15, because A3’s legal recovery of the ball after Team B touched it beyond the line, is considered a change of possession.*

**A.R. 4.87 DEAD BALL PERSONAL FOUL—LAST PLAY OF FIRST QUARTER**

First-and-10 on 50. A1 runs to the B20 where he is tackled inbounds or out of bounds, and B1 hits A1 late. Time in the first quarter expires on the play.

**Ruling:** First-and-goal on B10 to start the second quarter. The dead ball foul does not create an option to extend any quarter.

**A.R. 4.88 DEAD BALL PERSONAL FOUL—LAST PLAY OF HALF**

First-and-10 on 50. A1 runs to the B20 where he is tackled inbounds or out of bounds, and B1 piles on late. Time in the half expires on the play.

**Ruling:** Half over. The dead ball personal foul by B1 will be enforced on the second half kickoff. If the action by B1 was a disqualifying act, he would be disqualified.

**A.R. 4.89 FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT—FIRST TOUCH—LAST PLAY OF GAME**

Fourth-and-10 on B30. With 0:02 remaining in the 4th quarter of a tied game, A1’s field goal attempt from the B38 is partially blocked and rolling on the ground at the B27 where A2 downs it. (a) Left wingback A3 and tight end A4 chop block B2 on the play; or (b) there are no fouls on the play.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B’s ball, first-and-10 on A47. Extend for an untimed down. **All fouls** can be carried over and added to the succeeding spot (the spot of the kick).
- (b) If Team B chooses, B’s ball, first-and-10 on B27. Extend for an untimed down for the first touch by A2. There is no option to extend from the spot of the kick.

**A.R. 4.90 PUNT—LAST PLAY OF HALF—FIRST TOUCH AND DEAD BALL FOUL**

Fourth-and 10 on A15. A1’s punt is rolling at the 50 where A2 downs it, after which B2 hits the punter helmet to helmet at the A15. Time in the half expires on the play.

**Ruling:** B’s ball, first-and-10 on B35. Extend for a play from scrimmage. The extension for the first touch also allows the dead ball foul to be enforced. If B declines the extension, B’s foul will be enforced on the opening kickoff of the second half (or overtime, if applicable).

**Note:** *B cannot accept the extension for the first touch and also have the UNR enforced on the ensuing kickoff. If B2’s hit on the punter was flagrant, he could be disqualified.*

**A.R. 4.91 LAST PLAY OF GAME—DEAD BALL FOUL AFTER MISSED FIELD GOAL**

Fourth-and-5 on B30. On the last play of regulation in a tied game, A1’s field goal attempt is short. (a) The ball hits in the end zone, and A1 then slugs B1; or (b) B2 catches the kick in the end zone and downs it there or returns it to

the B20. Immediately after B2 is down, A1 slugs B1.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b): Go to overtime. Enforce the penalty on the overtime kickoff. Disqualify A1.

**A.R. 4.92 LAST PLAY OF FIRST HALF—FOUL PRIOR TO MISSED FIELD GOAL**

Fourth-and-3 on B33. On the last play of the first half, kicker A1 attempts a field goal from the B40 that is blocked and the ball rolls to the B10 where B1 recovers the ball and runs to the 50 where he's tackled. Prior to the kick Tackle A8 tripped B8 at the B36.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A35. Extend for an untimed down. **All fouls by the kicking team** can be tacked on to the succeeding spot and the half extended.

**A.R. 4.93 EXTENSION—TEAM A FOUL ON TRY AT END OF HALF**

Third-and-10 on B40. Team B leads 21-13. On the last play of regulation, A1's pass is complete to A2 for a touchdown. On the ensuing 2-point Try from the B2, A1 passes to A3 in the end zone, and A3 pushes off to make the catch. A3 is called for offensive pass interference.

**Ruling:** Re-Try on B12. The Try is an untimed down, so the extension rules do not apply.

**A.R. 4.94 DEAD BALL UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT FOUL AFTER TOUCHDOWN—LAST PLAY OF GAME**

Fourth-and-12 on B20. Team B is leading 21-14 with three seconds remaining in the game. A1 throws a pass to A2 who catches the ball at the B6 and scores. Following the touchdown, A2 spikes the ball at B2 lying on the ground.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. The foul is enforced on the Try and counts toward a potential disqualification of A2 for two such fouls.

**A.R. 4.95 FAIR CATCH—END OF HALF**

Fourth-and-12 on A15. A1 punts to B1 as the half expires. B1 signals and makes a valid fair catch at the 50.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on 50, and the receiving team may only extend for a fair catch kick.

**A.R. 4.96 FAIR CATCH ON LAST PLAY OF GAME—FOUL BY TEAM A**

Fourth-and-Five on A25. With 0:05 remaining in the game Team A leads 23-20. Kicker A1 punts and B1 signals for a fair catch at the B48 and muffs the ball into the air. B1 catches the ball at the 50 (0:00). Team A had six players on the line of scrimmage at the snap.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Extend for a fair catch kick (due to the valid fair catch) or extend for a play from scrimmage (due to Team A's illegal formation foul).

**A.R. 4.97 FAIR CATCH ON LAST PLAY—PERSONAL FOUL BY TEAM A AFTER CATCH**

Fourth-and-10 on A10. A1 punts the ball, and B1 signals for a fair catch at the A45. After B1 completes the fair catch, A2 tackles B1. Time in the half expires on the play.

**Ruling:** Extend for a fair catch kick from the A30, or Team B could decline the extension and have the 15-yard penalty enforced against Team A to start the third quarter. The extension occurs due to the valid fair catch, and the dead ball personal foul by A2 is therefore enforced. There is no option to fair catch kick from the A45 and carry the 15-yard penalty to the third quarter. (10-2-5)

**Note:** Had the contact occurred before the catch, there would be an option to run a play from the A30, but there would be no option to carry the foul over to the third quarter.

**A.R. 4.98 SAFETY—LAST PLAY OF GAME—FOUL BY TEAM A**

Fourth-and-10 on A45. Team A is ahead 17-10 with eight seconds remaining in the game. Punter A1 gets the snap and runs backward into A's end zone where he throws the ball over the end line in an attempt to consume time. During the play, A2 held B1 at the line of scrimmage. Time expires on the play.

**Ruling:** Safety. Game over. Team A wins 17-12. The foul by A2 on the last play of the game does not extend the period, because the ball was never punted, so there is nothing to create an extension opportunity. A safety does not create an extension, unless that safety is caused by a foul, or there is a personal foul (by the offense) on a play that ends in a safety.

**A.R. 4.99 SAFETY—LAST PLAY OF GAME—FOUL BY TEAM A**

Fourth-and-10 on A45. Team A is ahead 17-14 with eight seconds remaining in the game. Punter A1 gets the snap and runs backward into A's end zone where he fumbles the ball. While B1 is attempting to recover the ball, A1 bats the loose ball over the end line. Time expires on the play.

**Ruling:** Safety SK A20. Extend for an untimed down if Team B so elects because the safety is caused by the foul. The only extension option is for the safety kick. Enforcing the foul from the previous spot with a loss of down would not create an extension opportunity because that would be an offensive foul that did not create a safety and was not a major foul.

**Note:** If the ensuing safety kick goes out of bounds untouched by Team B, the receiving team can elect to extend the period for an untimed down after enforcement of the penalty for the kickoff out of bounds.

**A.R. 4.100 SAFETY—LAST PLAY OF GAME - TEAM A FOULS IN THE END ZONE**

Fourth-and-10 on A3. Team A is ahead 21-16 on the final play of the game. The ball is snapped to punter A4 who begins to scramble and runs out of the back of the end zone as time expires on the game clock. During A4's scramble: (a) A5 holds in the end zone; or (b) A5 clips in the end zone.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Safety. Extend the half. Safety kick from the A20. Only major fouls can bridge to the kickoff or safety kick.
- (b) Safety. Extend for a Safety Kick from the A10. Because Team A committed a personal foul during a play that resulted in a safety, Team B can elect to extend, and the personal foul yardage can be enforced on the Safety Kick (4-8-2-b-4).

**A.R. 4.101 FOUL DURING HALFTIME OR OVERTIME INTERMISSION**

As the teams are walking to the locker room at the end of the first half, or while awaiting the overtime coin toss, A1:

- (a) punches; or (b) taunts B1.

**Rulings:** In both (a) and (b), the 15-yard penalty will be assessed against Team A on the succeeding kickoff. A1 would also be disqualified for the punch or for the taunting if it was his second such violation.

**A.R. 4.102 PERSONAL FOUL BY TEAM B IN THE CONTINUING ACTION AFTER TRY ATTEMPT**

A1 scores on the last play of the fourth quarter to make the score 34-33 in favor of Team B. On the ensuing 2-point Try, Runner A2 is driven out of bounds at the B½-yard line, and B2 hits him late out of bounds.

**Ruling:** Game over. Team B wins 34-33. There is no extension or enforcement of the dead ball foul, as it would be enforced on the kickoff. There would be no replay of the Try attempt, regardless of the remaining time on the clock.

**A.R. 4.103 DELAY OF GAME AT END OF GAME—SPIKE**

Third-and-10 on B20. With 0:03 left in a tied game, A1's pass is knocked down by B1 at the B7. B1 immediately scoops the ball up and forcibly throws it downfield in celebration. Time expires on the play.

**Ruling:** Go to overtime. The foul is not enforced. This is a dead ball delay of game penalty, but not an unsportsmanlike conduct or unnecessary roughness foul that would be enforced on the overtime kickoff.

**A.R. 4.104 LIVE BALL PERSONAL FOUL ON LAST PLAY OF QUARTER/HALF**

Second-and-10 on B40. QBA1 scrambles to the B30 where he is tackled. A4 commits an illegal peel back block on the line of scrimmage. Time expires on the play: (a) at the end of the first/third quarter; or (b) at the end of either half.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-25 on A45 to begin the second/fourth quarter. There is no option to extend the quarter for an offensive foul.
- (b) Half over. A live ball foul (by either team) cannot be carried over to the second half or overtime.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**A.R. 4.105 FAILURE BY OFFICIALS TO ENFORCE PENALTY YARDAGE**

Second-and-10 on B30. On the last play of the first half, quarterback A1 throws an incomplete pass, but B2 was offside on the play. The penalty is accepted, and the half is extended for an untimed down, on which Team A attempts, but misses, a field goal with the ball snapped from the B30. It is then discovered that the officials did not mark off the five-yard penalty.

**Ruling:** Half over. Once a legal snap or kick has occurred a penalty enforcement cannot be corrected.

**A.R. 4.106 DELAY OF GAME AT END OF PLAY—SPIKE**

First-and-10 on B40. A1's pass is intercepted by B1 who runs it back to the A40. After being tackled, while still on the ground, B1 forcefully throws the ball downfield.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Dead ball foul.

**A.R. 4.107 SPIKE AT END OF PLAY IN END ZONE**

First-and-10 on B20. A1 throws a pass into the end zone, where: (a) A2; or (b) B2, almost catches the pass, but drops it. In disgust: (a) A2; or (b) B2, picks up the ball and forcibly spikes it into the ground in the end zone.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b): Second-and-10 on B20. No foul when done by either A or B in the end zone or out of bounds, as long as it is not directed at an opponent.

**A.R. 4.108 BACKWARD PASS IN END ZONE ON LAST PLAY OF GAME**

Third-and-12 on B15. On the last play of the game, B leads 23-20, and B2 intercepts a pass in the end zone and immediately throws the ball in the air in celebration. The ball goes backward and is recovered by A5 in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Touchdown A, game over. Do not attempt the Try. Until the Team B player gives himself up by going to the ground, or is down by contact, the play is still alive. The backward pass remains alive and the recovery by Team A is legal. If the pass was forward, it would be a foul for an illegal forward pass and a safety.

## **RULE 5 PLAYERS, SUBSTITUTIONS, AND EQUIPMENT**

### **PLAYERS**

#### **A.R. 5.1**

#### **TWELVE MEN ON THE FIELD—OFFENSE**

Second-and-10 on A20. Team A is running a no-huddle offense, and substitute A12 comes onto the field. Team A has 12 men on the field for 5 seconds as the QB calls plays, but they are not in a huddle, and they are not set at the line. Two seconds after the team gets set in formation at the line, A11 realizes he was supposed to leave the game, so he runs off the field and is off 4 seconds later. The ball is then snapped before the play clock runs out, and A1 goes out of bounds at the 50.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on the 50. No foul, since A was not in a huddle with 12 men or set in formation with 12 men for more than three seconds. If this occurs before the two-minute warning, the Umpire should hold up play until the defense has the opportunity to match up.

#### **A.R. 5.2**

#### **TWELVE MEN IN FORMATION—OFFENSE**

Third-and-3 on B5. Team A is running a no-huddle offense, and substitute A12 runs onto the field after the previous play. All 12 offensive players get set in formation, and four seconds later, A11 realizes he was supposed to leave the game, so he runs off the field.

**Ruling:** Third-and-8 on B10. There were 12 men set in the offensive formation for more than 3 seconds, so the play is blown dead, and an illegal substitution foul called. If this occurs before the two-minute warning, the Umpire should hold up play until the defense has the opportunity to match up.

#### **A.R. 5.3**

#### **TWELVE MEN ON THE FIELD—DEFENSE**

First-and-10 on B40. Team B has 12 men on the field. The ball is snapped and A2 runs to the B31. (a) The twelfth man was attempting to get off the field before the snap, but he didn't make it; or (b) All 12 Team B players were in formation at the snap, with no one attempting to leave the field.

#### **Rulings:**

(a) Second-and-1 on B31, or first-and-5 on B35. Let the play go, as the twelfth man was not in formation when the snap was imminent. Penalty enforced after play, if accepted.

(b) First-and-5 on B35. When the offense is set and legally able to snap the ball, the play is blown dead before the snap, as there were 12 men on defense in the formation. If the play is not blown dead, the only enforcement option for the offense is 5 yards from the previous spot, and the down is replayed.

#### **A.R. 5.4**

#### **TEN PLAYERS—OFFENSE**

Third-and-5 on A14. A1 goes to the B30. At the snap, Team A had 10 players on the field, seven on the line of scrimmage.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B30. No foul.

#### **A.R. 5.5**

#### **END OF QUARTER—POSITION CHANGE**

Third-and-7 on B9. At the start of the second quarter, tackle A60, who had reported eligible on the last play of the first quarter, returned for the second quarter, and lined up at left tackle without reporting. Runner A2 goes to the B1.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-goal on B1. Legal return by A60 to an ineligible position because the quarter had ended (5-3-2).

#### **A.R. 5.6**

#### **POSITION CHANGE—AFTER SCORE**

Fourth-and-8 on B37. Lineman number 76 enters the game and reports as eligible to the Referee. On a fake punt, number 76 catches a pass for a touchdown. On the subsequent Try, number 76 lines up at tackle. The Try is good.

**Ruling:** Try is good. 76 may line up in his original position (tackle) for the Try because of the touchdown (5-3-2).

#### **A.R. 5.7**

#### **POSITION CHANGE—AFTER FOUL**

Second-and-goal on B7. Right guard number A57 reports as an eligible receiver and lines up at tight end. On the play, he is interfered with in the end zone by B5. The ball is placed at the B1, first and goal. On the next play, without reporting, number A57 returns to his original position at guard, and Team A scores a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown. Legal for A57 to return to his original position because of the foul on the previous play (5-3-2).

#### **A.R. 5.8**

#### **POSITION CHANGE—AFTER SCRIMMAGE KICK**

Fourth-and-5 on B45. Lineman A76 enters the game and reports as eligible to the Referee. Punter A1's punt is blocked behind the line of scrimmage, where A2 recovers the ball and runs to the B38, where he is tackled. On the subsequent play, lineman A76 lines up at tackle.

**Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on B38. Lineman A76 may line up in his original position (tackle) for the first-down play because the ball was kicked (5-3-2).

#### **A.R. 5.9**

#### **POSITION CHANGE—AFTER REPORTING ELIGIBLE ON PREVIOUS PLAY**

Third-and-2 on A30. A60, wearing the number of an ineligible receiver, reports as an eligible player and lines up at tight end. A60 catches a pass and runs to the A35. On the next down, A60 reports to the Referee and returns to his original ineligible position at tackle. A1 runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-15 on A30. A60 must go out for one play. When A60 reports the second time, the Referee should advise A60 his action is illegal, or that Team A may call a timeout, and A60 could then play at the tackle position (5-3-2-i).

**A.R. 5.10 POSITION CHANGE—AFTER REPORTING AS INELIGIBLE ON PREVIOUS PUNTS**

Fourth-and-10 on A45. Punter A1 receives the snap and throws a pass to A85, who catches the ball and runs out of bounds at the B40. A85 was lined up at the RT position with the flyer outside of him lined up in the backfield, making A85 eligible as the end player on the line of scrimmage. A85 had reported as ineligible on Team A's three previous punts.

**Ruling:** A's ball, fourth-and-15 on A40. Illegal formation. A player who reported ineligible on a previous punt play must report as eligible to the Referee before lining up as an eligible receiver on subsequent punt plays. After he reports as eligible, the Referee will verbally signal his eligibility to the defense.

**A.R. 5.11 POSITION CHANGE—ELIGIBLE REPORTS AS INELIGIBLE**

First-and-10 on B20. Eligible A3 reports to the Referee that he will be ineligible for the ensuing down. (a) A3 lines up at the normal right tackle position and all of the other Team A players are aligned legally; or (b) A3 lines up as the right tackle but is split five yards wide of the right guard, and all other Team A players are aligned legally. A1 throws a pass to A2 who catches the ball and runs out of bounds at the B8.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball first-and-goal on B8. Legal formation.
- (b) A's ball first-and-15 on B25. Illegal formation as A3 is not aligned in the normal five ineligible player core.

**SUBSTITUTIONS**

**A.R. 5.12 MUST PARTICIPATE AT REPORTED POSITION**

On a Try for point from the B15, Team A lines up in a "swinging gate" formation with the center A67, who had reported as eligible, on the end of the line. Before the snap, Team A shifts to a normal formation with center A67 in the middle of the line, and successfully kicks the Try.

**Ruling:** Re-Try kick on B20 or 2-point Try on B7. When A67 reports as eligible, he must participate in an eligible position. The shift puts him in an ineligible position, which creates an illegal formation.

**A.R. 5.13 PLAYER LEAVES FIELD ON OPPONENT'S SIDELINE OR END LINE**

Third-and-12 on A40. A1 scrambles and gains five yards. At the end of the down, it is discovered that: (a) withdrawn offensive player A2 had cleared the field on the opponent's sideline or over the end line; or (b) withdrawn defensive player B1 had cleared the field on the opponent's sideline or over the end line.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Option: Third-and-17 on A35, or fourth-and-7 on A45. Live ball foul enforced at the previous spot (5-2-6).
- (b) Third-and-7 on A45. Live ball foul enforced at the previous spot (5-2-6).

**Note:** The penalty for leaving the field on the opponent's sideline is a live ball foul that occurs at the snap and thus penalized from the previous spot. Therefore, a team could call a timeout before the snap to avoid the penalty (5-2-8-(e)).

**A.R. 5.14 SUBSTITUTION AFTER SNAP—INTERFERENCE WITH PLAY**

Third-and-14 on A35. Team B makes a situational substitution sending four players into the game; however, five players leave the field. Following the snap, B11 realizes he should be in the game and re-enters the field of play. Shortly after B11 enters the game, A1 passes into B11's area, and B11 breaks up the pass at the 50-yard line.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on 50, or whatever result the crew determines to be appropriate. Palpably unfair act.

**Note:** Since B11 entered the field and had an immediate effect on the play, it is a palpably unfair act. If B11 had covered a different receiver and had not had a direct and immediate effect on the play, a five-yard penalty for illegal substitution would be enforced from the previous spot.

**A.R. 5.15 SUBSTITUTE ENTERS FIELD BEFORE SNAP—OFFENSE**

Third-and-3 on A40. The offense has 10 players on the field. Prior to the snap, A11 (who had not participated in the previous play) enters the field to participate in the play and: (a) enters past the numbers and sets in a legal position for one second before the snap; or (b) stays in motion backward as the ball is snapped, and he is behind the tight end at the snap. A2 runs to the A45.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Legal play if Team A has seven players on the line of scrimmage.
- (b) Third-and-8 on A35. Illegal shift. This would convert to a false start after the two-minute warning of a half and create the potential for a 10-second runoff (7-4-2-Item 6). In either (a) or (b), if this occurs before the two-minute warning, the Umpire should hold up play until the defense has the opportunity to match up.

**A.R. 5.16 SUBSTITUTE ENTERS FIELD BEFORE/AFTER SNAP—DEFENSE**

Third-and-3 on A35. The defense has 10 players on the field prior to the snap: (a) Just prior to the snap, B11 enters the field, onside, and makes the tackle on runner A3 at the A37; (b) B11 enters the field just after the ball is snapped, and after the play develops, B11 tackles A3 at the A37; or (c) B11 enters the field well after the ball is snapped and immediately tackles A3 as he is running near the Team B sideline at the A37.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Fourth-and-1 on A37. Legal play.
- (b) First-and-10 on A42. Illegal substitution. (If the crew feels he entered the field so late that this is a palpably-unfair act, they could enforce whatever they feel is equitable.)
- (c) First-and-10 on B48 (or whatever the crew deems equitable). Palpably-unfair act (12-3-4).

**A.R. 5.17 SUBSTITUTES ENTER FIELD ON PUNT PLAY—BEFORE POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-10 on A30. A1's punt is rolling at the B10. Before B1 picks up the punt at the B10, substitutes from: (a) Team A; (b) Team B; or (c) both teams come on the field at the B35 thinking the play is over. B1 returns the ball to the 50.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A45, or fourth-and-15 on A25. Enforce the illegal substitution from the dead ball or previous spot;
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B5. The post-possession foul is enforced from the end of the kick.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B5, or Team B has the option to replay—fourth-and-10 on A30. This is a double foul with a change of possession (14-5-2).

**A.R. 5.18 SUBSTITUTES ENTER FIELD ON PUNT PLAY—AFTER POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-10 on A30. A1's punt is rolling at the B10. After B1 picks up the punt at the B10, substitutes from: (a) Team A; (b) Team B; or (c) both teams enter at the B35 thinking the play is over. B1 returns the ball to the 50.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Enforcement is from the dead ball spot.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. Enforcement is from the spot of the foul since that is behind the dead ball spot (14-4-3).
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Enforcement is a double foul after a change of possession, so the ball is placed at the spot of Team B's foul, which is enforced as if it were the only foul on the play. In this case, that is the spot of B's foul or the dead ball spot, whichever is least advantageous for Team B (14-5-2-Exc. 4).

**A.R. 5.19 SUBSTITUTION BY TEAM A—QUICK SNAP—DEFENSE 12 PLAYERS ON FIELD**

First-and-10 on B45. A1 substitutes and quickly snaps the ball without huddling. Team B is caught with 12 men on the field, and illegal motion is called on A3. There are more than two minutes left in the half.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Play is voided by rule. No foul for 12 men on the field or illegal motion. Warn the offense that a second violation of this rule at any point during the game will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. The game clock is reset to the time remaining when the snap occurred and will start on the next snap.

***Note:** The officials should prevent this from happening, by standing over the ball while Team B "matches up." If they do not stand over the ball and it is snapped, only personal fouls or unsportsmanlike conduct fouls would be enforced.*

**A.R. 5.20 SUBSTITUTION—12 MEN IN OFFENSIVE HUDDLE**

Second-and-10 on B35. While Team A is in the huddle, A12 enters the huddle. The player for whom A12 was substituting is confused and does not realize that he is to leave the field, and he remains in the huddle.

**Ruling:** Second-and-15 on B40. Illegal substitution, 12 men in the huddle. The Referee blows the whistle immediately.

**A.R. 5.21 SUBSTITUTION—PLAYER WEARING INELIGIBLE NUMBER LINES UP IN ELIGIBLE POSITION**

Fourth-and-goal on B2. Team A player number 99 enters the game and lines up at the tight end position. He does not report as an eligible player. A1 scores on the play.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and goal on B7. Illegal formation. Numbers 90–99 are for ineligible players who must report if playing an eligible position (5-3-1).

**EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS**

**A.R. 5.22 ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT**

First-and-10 on 50. A1 starts to come into the game wearing illegal equipment when the Umpire sees him.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. The umpire should not allow A1 into the game.

**A.R. 5.23 UNIFORM IS TORN DURING PLAY**

Third-and-5 on 50. Quarterback A1 cannot spot an open receiver, scrambles, and runs to the B46. The Umpire reaches for the ball after the tackle and spots A1 wearing an illegally torn jersey.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-1 on B46. Suspend A1 for one play, or Team A may take a charged timeout to correct the equipment.

**A.R. 5.24 ALTERED JERSEY**

Third-and-2 on B35. A1 runs to the B30 where he is downed. At the end of the down, the Umpire notes that A3's jersey is cut off and altered.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B30. A3 must leave the game for one play and replace the jersey. The player can remain in the game by taking a timeout and replacing the jersey.

**A.R. 5.25 ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT—FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT**

Fourth-and-10 on B25. A field goal attempt from the B33 is good, and the Referee then discovers the kicker wearing an illegal kicking shoe.

**Ruling:** Kick is no good. B's ball, first-and-10 on B33. The kicker must replace the illegal shoe prior to entering the game for any subsequent kick attempt.

**A.R. 5.26 POTENTIAL ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE ON JERSEY—HURRY-UP OFFENSE**

With less than one minute remaining in the first half, after several prior checks, the Umpire believes there is silicone on the jersey of A6. Team A is in a hurry-up offense.

**Ruling:** The Umpire does not interrupt the hurry-up offense. At a normal break or at halftime, the Umpire checks A6, and if there is silicone or a foreign substance on the jersey, the jersey is confiscated and given to NFL security, and the player is suspended for one play. The team cannot avoid that one-play suspension with a timeout.

**A.R. 5.27 ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE ON JERSEY—PLAYER WITHDRAWS AND RETURNS**

First-and-10 on B40. Guard A2 asks the Umpire to check for silicone on B2's jersey. The Umpire finds silicone on B2's jersey and suspends him for at least one play to replace the jersey. He comes back three plays later, when A2 again requests a check of B2's jersey. B2 is found to have silicone on his jersey.

**Ruling:** Five yards enforced from succeeding spot, and B2 is suspended for a play. The team cannot avoid that one-play suspension with a timeout. The jersey is confiscated and given to NFL security (5-4-4-Item 7).

**A.R. 5.28 JERSEY—SILICONE—TEAM REQUESTS TIMEOUT TO REPLACE JERSEY**

Third-and-5 on A15. A2 runs to the A20 where B1 tackles him by the facemask. At the end of the down, officials notice that B1 has silicone on the front of his jersey. Team B asks if they can take a timeout to replace the jersey.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A35. B1 must be suspended for one down, and his jersey must be replaced. Team B is not charged a timeout. The player is not permitted to remain in the game by taking a charged timeout and replacing the jersey. Officials should confiscate the jersey.

**A.R. 5.29 ILLEGAL UNIFORM ATTACHMENT**

Third-and-6 on A21. A1 passes to A2 who runs out of bounds at the A45. After the play, officials notice that A2 has a towel approximately 20 inches long attached to the back of his belt. "Superstar" is written on the towel.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Officials should use their discretion, and if the message is in any way inflammatory, have the player remove it immediately. In any event, A2 will not be allowed back into the game after the next change of possession, unless he has removed the towel.



## RULE 6 FREE KICK

### KICKOFFS AND SAFETY KICKS

#### A.R. 6.1 KICKOFF—BALL LANDS SHORT OF LANDING ZONE

On a kickoff from the A35, the ball (a) lands at the B21 or (b) hits player B83 in the setup zone, and bounces to the B12. On-field officials blow the play dead when the ball hits the ground or player B83 short of the setup zone.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) B's ball first-and-10 at the B40. A kick that lands or touches a player short of the landing zone is treated like a kickoff out of bounds. The game clock should not have run because the ball was dead immediately.

#### A.R. 6.2 KICKOFF —BALL TOUCHED BY PLAYER NEAR LANDING ZONE

On a kickoff from the A35, kicker A19 kicks a line drive ball that is (a) deflected by B55 who remains with two feet on the ground in the setup zone; or (b) is deflected by B55 who jumps up from his position in the setup zone at the B35.

**Ruling:**

(a) B's ball first-and-10 at the B40.

(b) Illegal Formation on the receiving team because B55 moved before the ball touched a player or the ground in the Landing Zone or End Zone. Foul on the kicking team for short of landing zone. Offset fouls and re-kick.

#### A.R. 6.3 KICKOFF—BALL TOUCHES A PLAYER IN LANDING ZONE

On a kickoff from the A35, the ball lands at the B5 and bounces to the B1 where (a) it is recovered by B87 who returns the ball to the B10 (b) it goes untouched by the receiving team and A55 recovers the ball at the B1.

**Rulings:** (a) B's ball first-and-10 at the B10; (b) A's ball first-and-goal at the B1.

**Note:** The ball is "live" once it lands in the landing zone and either team can possess the ball.

#### A.R. 6.4 KICKOFF—BALL LANDS OR TOUCHES A PLAYER IN LANDING ZONE AND ROLLS INTO END ZONE

On a kickoff from the A35, the ball lands or is muffed by B87 at the B5 and bounces (a) into the end zone and is downed by B87; (b) goes out of bounds behind B's goal line; or (c) bounces into the end zone and back out to the B2 where B87 recovers and downs it.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) B's ball first-and-10 at the B20.

(c) B's ball, first-and-10 at the B2.

#### A.R. 6.5 KICKOFF—SHORT OF LANDING ZONE – FOUL(S) ON THE PLAY

On a kickoff from the A35, the ball lands short of the landing zone at the B22 and the officials blow the play dead immediately. (a) Team A was in an illegal formation, or (b) after the ball hit the ground, A2 and B2 committed unnecessary roughness fouls.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Team B option: to decline the foul for illegal formation, as that would be enforced from the dead ball spot, the B22, enforce the foul from the previous spot, or accept the foul for the kick short of the landing zone 25 yards from the previous spot.

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B22 or re-kick A35. This is a double foul with a change of possession and a double foul after a change of possession. The fouls offset at the spot where B's foul would be enforced if it were the only foul, which is the dead ball spot on this play. There is also an option to re-kick for a double foul with a change of possession on a kick play.

**Note:** This would be the same ruling for a kickoff out of bounds.

#### A.R. 6.6 KICKOFF—AIRBORNE BALL LANDS IN END ZONE

On a kickoff from the A35, the ball lands in the end zone and (a) B87 downs the ball in the end zone; (b) bounces out of bounds in the end zone; (c) B87 returns the ball to the B37; or (d) bounces out to the B2 where B87 recovers and downs it.

**Ruling:** (a) and (b) B's ball first-and-10 at the B30;

(c) B's ball first-and-10 at the B37;

(d) B's ball first-and-10 at the B2.

#### A.R. 6.7 KICKOFF-RECEIVING TEAM PLAYER STRADDLING LINE

On a kickoff from the A35, returner B80 (a) catches the ball with one foot on the B21 and the other foot on the B19; (b) catches the ball with one foot on the B1 and the other foot in the end zone and downs the ball in the end zone; (c) with both feet in the end zone, reaches out to catch the ball at the 1 yard line and downs the ball in the end zone; or (d) starts in the end zone and leaves his feet and catches the ball in the air at the B2 where he continues downfield to the B25.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball first-and-10 at the B40;

(b) B's ball first-and-10 at the B20;

(c) B's ball first-and-10 at the B30;

(d) B's ball first-and-10 at the B25.

The location of the player's feet determines whether a ball was caught in or outside the landing zone. At the B20, this is identical to the situation when a receiving team player catches a kick while straddling the sideline and the ruling is a kickoff out of bounds.

**Note:** In (b), (c) and (d), the ball is live, and the receiving team player must either down the ball in the end zone or return it in the field of play.

## **KICKOFF – MOVEMENT OF PLAYERS**

### **A.R. 6.8 KICKOFF—TIMING OF MOVEMENT OF PLAYERS—BALL LANDS OR TOUCHES A PLAYER IN LANDING ZONE**

On a kickoff from the A35, the ball lands at the B5 and is picked up and returned by B87 to the B18. Prior to the ball hitting the ground or a player inside the landing zone, (a) A38 of the kickoff team lifts a foot and starts to move downfield; (b) B75 of the receiving team takes a step while inside the setup zone; or (c) A38 of the kickoff team moves downfield and B75 of the receiving team reacts and moves to block him.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) Re-kick A30 for the offside; or B's ball first-and-10 on the B23. The setup zone and landing zone do not change if the penalty is enforced from the previous spot for a re-kick.
- (b) Re-kick from A40 or decline the penalty and B's ball first-and-10 on B18.
- (c) Re-kick from A35. Offsetting fouls (Illegal formation by A and Illegal Formation by B).

It is a live ball foul if a kicking team player on the kicking team's restraining line or receiving team player in the setup zone move their feet before the ball hits the ground or a player in the landing zone or end zone.

### **A.R. 6.9 KICKOFF—TIMING OF MOVEMENT OF PLAYERS—BALL TOUCHES GROUND IN END ZONE**

On a kickoff from the A35, the ball lands in the end zone and is not immediately possessed by the receiving team. Eventually, B80 picks up the loose ball and returns it to the B15. Kicking team player A50 started downfield and B52 moved downfield to block when the ball landed in the end zone.

**Ruling:** (a) B's ball first-and-10 on B15. Players on both the kicking and receiving teams can move once the ball hits the ground or a player in the end zone.

**Note:** If the ball hits the ground in the end zone and then goes out of bounds beyond the goal line, the play is dead even though players on the kicking and receiving team have started to move.

### **A.R. 6.10 KICKOFF—DEEP RECEIVER'S ACTIONS**

On a kickoff from the A35, B4 is one of the two deep receivers and is standing on the B5 yard line. As the kicker approaches the ball, he runs forward and is at the B22 when the ball is kicked. He continues into the receiving team's setup zone and is at the B32 when the ball is caught at the B4 by returner B1. B1 is tackled at the B35.

**Ruling:** Re-kick A40 or B's ball, first-and-10 on B35 (decline penalties). There are two fouls for Illegal formation. All receiving team players lined up outside the setup zone must remain behind the receiving team's 20-yard line until the ball is kicked and behind the receiving team's 30-yard line until the ball lands or is touched by a receiving team player in the landing zone or end zone.

## **FREE KICK—GAME CLOCK**

### **A.R. 6.11 GAME CLOCK STARTS WHEN BALL IS TOUCHED BY EITHER TEAM**

With :05 remaining in the fourth period, Team A kicks the ball into the landing zone and the ball rolls untouched for 3 seconds. B80 eventually downs the ball at the B30, and the game clock reads :05 at the end of the down.

**Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 at B30. Reset game clock to :04. The clock starts upon touching by either team in the landing zone, so at least 1 second should have run off the clock.

### **A.R. 6.12 PALPABLY UNFAIR ACT**

With :03 remaining in the fourth period, Team A kicks the ball from the A35 into the Landing Zone. Prior to the ball hitting the ground or a player inside the Landing Zone, (a) multiple players of the kickoff team intentionally move downfield; or (b) multiple players of the receiving team intentionally move while inside the Setup Zone.

**Ruling:** Palpably Unfair Act. (a) Re-kick A20 or add 15 yards to the end of the play. Reset the game clock to :03 in either case; (b) Re-kick 50 and reset the game clock to :03 or decline the penalty.

**Note:** All reasonable efforts should be made to not allow either team to abuse the rule. The officials can enforce the foul in any manner they deem equitable whether or not a prior warning has been given.

## **ONSIDE KICKS**

### **A.R. 6.13 ONSIDE KICK GOES UNTOUCHED THROUGH SETUP ZONE**

With 14:55 remaining in the fourth period, Team A is trailing by 12 points and declares an onside kick to the officiating crew. The ball is kicked and goes through the setup zone untouched. The officials immediately blow the play dead when the ball touches the ground or a player beyond the B40 yard line.

**Ruling:** Unsportsmanlike Conduct. B's ball first-and-10 at A20. The penalty is enforced 15 yards from the kicking team's restraining line and the ball belongs to the receiving team.

### **A.R. 6.14 ONSIDE KICK FAILS TO GO 10 YARDS—UNTOUCHED BY EITHER TEAM**

A1 tries an onside kick from the A35. The ball rolls to a stop untouched at the A44.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A44. The ball belongs to the receiving team at the dead ball spot.

### **A.R. 6.15 ONSIDE KICK—ILLEGAL TOUCH**

On an onside kick from the A35, A1 illegally touches the ball at the A43. B1 picks up the ball, runs to the A20, fumbles, and A2 recovers there.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A43. Team B has the option to take the ball at the spot of illegal touching by Team A, however, the five-yard penalty for illegal touching cannot be enforced from the illegal touch spot, unless that is also the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 6.16      ONSIDE KICK—ILLEGAL TOUCH—TEAM B RECOVERS OR KICK GOES OUT OF BOUNDS**

On an onside kick from the A35, A1 illegally touches the ball at the A44. The ball continues to roll to the A48 where: (a) B1 recovers and is tackled; or (b) B1 touches the ball, and it then rolls out of bounds there.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b): B's ball, first-and-10 on A43. The five-yard penalty for illegal touching is enforced from the dead ball spot.

*Note: Team B could also take the ball at the illegal touch spot (A44), but the five-yard penalty for the illegal touching can only be enforced from the dead ball spot.*

**A.R. 6.17      ONSIDE KICK—ILLEGAL TOUCH**

On onside kick from the A35: (a) A2 illegally recovers the ball at the A42; (b) the kick goes out of bounds untouched at the 50; or (c) A2 illegally touches the kick at the A42, after which B1 picks up the kick at the A46 and returns it to the A21.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A37. Illegal touch and recovery by Team A. The penalty can be assessed from the dead ball spot because the recovery by Team A was not legal, so Team B is awarded possession at that spot.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on the 50. Decline the foul for kickoff out of bounds.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on A16. The five-yard penalty for illegal touching can be enforced from the dead ball spot, provided Team B has possession at that spot.

**A.R. 6.18      ONSIDE KICK—ILLEGAL TOUCH BY A—LEGAL RECOVERY BY A**

On an onside kick attempt from the A35, A1 illegally touches the ball at the A44, and A2 then recovers at the A46.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A44. Since A2's recovery at the A46 is a legal recovery, there is no option to enforce the five-yard penalty from the dead ball spot. Team B's only options are for a re-kick after a five-yard penalty, or to take the ball at the illegal touch spot.

**A.R. 6.19      ONSIDE KICK—KICKING TEAM PLAYER CATCHES KICK**

Team A tries an onside kick from the A35 which goes directly into the air and is caught by A2 at the A47: (a) No Team B player was near the ball; or (b) B2 could have caught ball.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on A47. Legal catch and recovery.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on A32. Interference with the opportunity to catch a kick. No time would run off the game clock in either (a) or (b). (10-1-1)

**A.R. 6.20      ONSIDE KICK INTO GROUND—FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—RECOVERY BY TEAM A**

On an onside kick from the A35, the ball is kicked down into the ground and bounces high into the air coming down at the A47 where B1 gives a fair catch signal. A1 blocks him out of the way before the ball arrives, and A2 catches the ball there.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A47. Since the ball was kicked into the ground, Team B is not permitted to signal for a fair catch, and they do not have the right to an unhindered opportunity to catch the kick. Team A is allowed to block after 10 yards, because the ball hit the ground, and they are allowed to push or pull an opponent in an attempt to recover a ball which they may legally recover. Team A would decline the option to enforce a five-yard penalty from the spot of the illegal signal (B's ball) and would take possession at the spot where the kick was recovered.

**A.R. 6.21      ONSIDE KICK—MULTIPLE TEAM A FOULS**

On an onside kick from the A35, Kicker A1 kicks the ball directly into the air. B1 is in position to catch the kick at the A44, but A2 interferes with the ball or B1. The ball then (a) goes out of bounds at the A46, last touched by A2; (b) is recovered by B2 at the 50; (c) goes to the A46 where it is recovered by A2; or (d) goes to the A42 where it is recovered by A2.

**Rulings:**

- (a), (b), and (c) B's ball first-and-10 on A29. Interference with the opportunity to catch a kick. B can cross his restraining line in an effort to catch the kick. A2 committed interference with the opportunity to catch a kick when he interfered with the ball or B1.
- (d) B's ball first-and-10 on A27. Interference with the opportunity to catch a kick. The ball belongs to Team B at the A42 because it did not reach the A45 and Team B did not touch the ball before recovery, so the penalty can be enforced from that spot.

**A.R. 6.22      ONSIDE KICK—AIRBORNE CONTROL BY TEAM A—LANDS OUT OF BOUNDS**

A1 attempts an onside kick from the A35. The ball bounces and goes into the air. As the ball is airborne near the sideline at the A46, A2 jumps up and controls the ball there. Before A2 comes to the ground, he is pushed out of bounds where he maintains control of the ball when he hits the ground. A2 would have landed inbounds.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A46. This is a kickoff out of bounds, because A2 did not complete the process of the catch inbounds. Team B would take the ball at the dead ball spot, as it is more beneficial than 25 yards from the spot of the kick.

**A.R. 6.23      ONSIDE KICK—MULTIPLE FOULS BY TEAM A**

On an onside kick into the ground from the A35, A1 blocks B1 high at the A44 while the ball is at the A42. The ball goes out of bounds untouched at the A48.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A38. Team B also has the option of a re-kick from the A25, but it would choose to

enforce the illegal block foul from the dead ball spot. The block is illegal, because Team A blocked within the first 10 yards before the ball was legally touched.

**A.R. 6.24      ONSIDE KICK—BALL BATTED BACKWARD BY TEAM B**

On an onside kick from the A35, the ball rolls toward the sideline at the A44 where B1 bats the ball backward to the B46 where it glances off of A2's leg, and it goes out of bounds at the B38.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B38. No foul for a kickoff out of bounds, since A2 is deemed not to have touched the ball. It is a legal bat because the ball was batted backward.

**A.R. 6.25      ONSIDE KICK—TEAM A ILLEGAL FORMATION**

On an onside kick from the A35, A3 is moving his feet forward before the kick but is not offside. A4 then recovers the kick at the A47.

**Ruling:** Re-kick from A30, after the five-yard illegal formation penalty for A3 not keeping both feet on the ground from the time the kicker starts forward until the ball is kicked.

**A.R. 6.26      ONSIDE KICK—LAST TOUCHED BY TEAM A BEFORE GOING OUT OF BOUNDS**

On a grounded onside kick from the A35, the ball is touched by B2 at the A43 and muffed to the A44 where A2 then muffs it causing the ball to go out of bounds at the B48.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B48. Team B would decline the foul for a kickoff out of bounds, unless the ball went out of bounds more than 25 yards from the spot of the kick.

**A.R. 6.27      ONSIDE KICK—DOUBLE AND MULTIPLE FOULS**

On an onside kick from the A35, the ball rolls to the A43 where A1 muffs it, and the ball rolls out of bounds at the A44. After A1 muffed the ball, and before it went out of bounds, B2 blocked A3 below the waist at the A42.

**Ruling:** Re-kick A35. Illegal touch and kickoff out of bounds by Team A; low block by Team B. It is not a 5 vs. 15 enforcement, because neither the illegal touch nor the kick off out of bounds are simple five-yard penalties, and because there was a change of possession on the play.

**A.R. 6.28      ONSIDE KICK—DOUBLE FOUL—KICKOFF OUT OF BOUNDS/CLIP**

On an onside kick from the A35, the ball goes out of bounds at the A48. B1 clips while the ball is rolling toward the sideline.

**Ruling:** Re-kick A35. The kickoff out of bounds and clipping offset. It is not a 5 vs. 15 enforcement, as the result of the play is a change of possession, and because a kickoff out of bounds is not a simple five-yard penalty.

**A.R. 6.29      ONSIDE KICK—LEGAL RECOVERY BY TEAM A—DOUBLE FOUL**

On an onside kick from the A35, A2 is offside. A1 recovers at the A47, and B1 tackles A1 by the facemask.

**Ruling:** Re-kick 50. Double foul (5 vs. 15) applies, as there was no change of possession. Enforce B's foul from the previous spot and re-kick.

**A.R. 6.30      ONSIDE KICK—DOUBLE FOUL—ILLEGAL TOUCH/LOW BLOCK**

On an onside kick from the A35, A1 is the first to touch the kick at the A42, and A2 then recovers the kick at the A46. During the kick, B1 blocks A3 below the waist at the A44.

**Ruling:** Re-kick at the A35. This is not a 5 vs. 15 enforcement, because the illegal touch is not a simple five-yard penalty.

**FREE KICK—BALL GOING OUT OF BOUNDS**

**A.R. 6.31      ONSIDE KICK OUT OF BOUNDS—LAST TOUCHED BY TEAM B**

On an onside kick from the A35, the ball rolls out of bounds at the B32 after first touching A1 at the A47 and then B1.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B32. The receiving team last touched the ball, and A1's touch was legal, so it is not a foul for kickoff out of bounds and the ball belongs to Team B at the dead ball spot. This is not a foul for the kick going beyond the onside kick setup zone because it was touched inside the zone.

**FREE KICK—BALL INTO RECEIVER'S END ZONE**

**A.R. 6.32      KICK INTO END ZONE—FUMBLED INTO FIELD OF PLAY**

On a kickoff from the A35, B1 catches the ball in the end zone and fumbles after he starts to run. The ball rolls out to the B4 where B2 falls on the ball. The game clock did not run on the play. There is: (a) 3:22; or (b) 1:55 left in the fourth quarter.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B4. Game clock is set to 3:21.

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. After the two-minute warning, the ball returns to the spot of the fumble, since the ball was recovered by the non-fumbling player, which is a touchback. Because the kick first touched a Team B player in the end zone and became dead in the end zone, the touchback spot is the 30-yard line. Game clock is set to 1:54.

**A.R. 6.33      KICK INTO END ZONE—LIVE BALL**

On a kickoff, the untouched ball hits in the end zone where: (a) B1 then muffs the ball, and it rolls out of bounds at the B2-yard line or (b) Team A recovers and downs it.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B2. The kickoff or safety kick is a live ball when it hits in the end zone. Because Team

B last touched it, they are responsible for it going out of bounds and will next snap at that spot.  
(b) Touchdown Team A. A kickoff or safety kick into the end zone is a live ball.

**A.R. 6.34 KICK INTO END ZONE—BALL TOUCHED BY TEAM B—REBOUNDS OUT OF BOUNDS**

On a kickoff, B1 muffs the ball at the B4, and it rolls into the end zone and rebounds out of bounds at the B2.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B2. *Because the ball did not become dead in the end zone after having been touched by B2 in the landing zone, this is not a touchback and belongs to Team B at the out of bounds spot.*

**A.R. 6.35 KICK INTO END ZONE—TEAM B BATS THE BALL WHILE IN END ZONE**

Kickoff from the A35. B1 tries to catch the kick in his end zone but muffs it there. While the ball is still in the end zone, B1 bats it over the end line.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B30 (decline foul for illegal bat), or re-kick from A45. It is not a safety, as the foul occurred during the kick. *The ball was first touched in the end zone, so the touchback spot is the 30-yard line.*

**A.R. 6.36 KICKOFF—PERSONAL FOUL BY TEAM A PRIOR TO POSSESSION BY TEAM B**

On a kickoff from the A35, the kick bounces at the B15 yard-line and rolls through the back of the end zone. After the kick hit the ground at the B15 and while the ball was loose, A2 grabs and pulls the facemask of B3.

**Ruling:** Re-kick from A20, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. *The touchback spot for this kick that hit in the landing zone and was dead in the end zone is the B20 yard-line.* The 15-yard penalty by the kicking team can be added to that spot or enforced from the previous spot.

**A.R. 6.37 FREE KICK—FOUL BY EITHER TEAM IN TEAM B END ZONE DURING KICK**

On A1's kickoff from the A35, B1 muffs the kick at the B10, and the ball rolls into the end zone. In the scramble for the loose ball: (a) A2 holds B2; or (b) B2 holds A2, to allow a teammate to recover the ball. The ball is recovered and downed by B3 in the end zone.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Re-kick A25, or B's ball, first-and-10 on **B30**. Fouls by the kicking team during the kick are enforced from the previous spot (re-kick) or the dead ball spot as long as B does not lose possession during the down.
- (b) Re-kick A45, or B's ball, first-and-10 on **B20**. The only option for enforcing fouls by the receiving team during the kick is the previous spot (re-kick).

**Note:** Fouls by either team during the kick are penalized as offensive fouls. *Because this kick was touched by the receiving team in the landing zone and became dead in the end zone, the touchback spot is the B20.*

**BLOCKING**

**A.R. 6.38 BLOCKING BY TEAM A ON **ONSIDE** KICK**

On an **onside** kick from the A35, after the ball has been kicked, A2 blocks B2: (a) at the A43 while the ball is rolling at the A46; (b) at the A47 after B2 muffs the ball at the A46; (c) at the A46 while the ball is rolling on the ground (untouched) at the A48; or (d) at the B48 while the kick is untouched in the air. The kick is recovered and downed by B4 at the B45.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Illegal block by A2 that is enforced from the end of the kick, (or the previous spot on a re-kick). It is illegal for Team A to block in the first 10 yards, (between Team A's and Team B's restraining lines), until the ball is legally touched.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Legal block. Team A may legally block between 10 and 15 yards beyond Team A's restraining line, after the ball has touched the ground or been legally touched.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Legal block. Team A may legally block between 10 and 15 yards beyond Team A's restraining line, after the ball has touched the ground or been legally touched.
- (d) B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Legal block. Team A may legally block more than 5 yards beyond Team B's restraining line, (15 yards beyond Team A's restraining line), anytime, regardless of whether the ball has touched the ground or been legally touched.

**Note:** *The location of the ball is irrelevant in determining the legality of blocking on **onside** kicks. The key is the location of the block, and whether the ball has touched the ground or been legally touched.*

**A.R. 6.39 BLOCKING BY TEAM B ON **ONSIDE** KICK**

On an **onside** kick from the A35, after the ball has been kicked: (a) B2 blocks A2 at the A48 while the ball is in the air; (b) B2 moves forward beyond Team B's restraining line to the A43 but does not block A2 until the ball touches the ground at the A43 or A46; (c) B2 blocks A2 at the A46 after the pooch kick is touched by B1 at the A44 or A46; or (d) B2 blocks A2 at the B48 while the kick is untouched in the air. The kick is recovered and downed by B4 at the B45.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Re-kick A45. It is illegal for Team B to block in the first 15 yards from Team A's restraining line until the ball has touched the ground or been legally touched.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Legal block. Team B can legally block anywhere after the ball has touched the ground or been legally touched.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Legal block. Team B can legally block anywhere after the ball has touched the ground or been legally touched.
- (d) B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Team B can legally block more than 5 yards beyond Team B's restraining line, (15 yards beyond Team A's restraining line), anytime, regardless of whether the ball has touched the ground

or been legally touched.

**Note:** The location of the ball is irrelevant in determining the legality of blocking on onside kicks. The key is the location of the block, and whether the ball has touched the ground or been legally touched.

**A.R. 6.40 KICKOFF—TEAM B DOUBLE TEAM BLOCK**

On a kickoff from the A35, B3 is one of **nine** players in the setup zone. After the kick is caught by B1, B3 double team blocks (a) A2 at the B28, with teammate B4 who was also lined up in the setup zone, or (b) A2 at the B20, with teammate B5 who originally lined up as one of **two** players positioned outside of the setup zone. B1 returns the kick to the B35.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on the B35. No foul for 2 players blocking an opponent together who were both originally in the setup zone. They may double team block an opponent together, anywhere on the field, though they may not form a wedge.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on the B10. It is a foul for an illegal double team block if 2 or more players of the receiving team block an opponent together if they weren't both originally in the setup zone. The 15-yard penalty is enforced as a foul on a running play in this case, as it happened during the return. If it happened during the kick, it would be enforced from the spot of the foul. This is a personal foul.

**Note:** As described, (a) is a legal double team block, and (b) is an illegal double team block. In either case, had the two players gone together, shoulder to shoulder, within two yards of each other, and moved forward together (with or without contacting an opponent), it would be an illegal wedge. Enforcement is the same, but an illegal wedge is prohibited by any two Team B players, while an illegal double team block is prohibited if one of the two players did not start in the setup zone.

**MISCELLANEOUS FREE KICK PLAYS**

**A.R. 6.41 DELAY OF KICKOFF**

The Back Judge hands the ball to the kicker for a kickoff at the A35 and winds the 25-second play clock. The kicker does not begin to move towards the ball before the play clock hits zero.

**Ruling:** Kickoff A30. Delay of kickoff.

**Note:** If the kicker has started toward the ball before the play clock hits :00, delay of kickoff should not be called.

**A.R. 6.42 TWELVE MEN ON THE FIELD AT THE TIME OF READY FOR PLAY SIGNAL**

Team A lines up for a kickoff from the A35. The Back Judge starts the play clock, and officials then discover that Team A has 12 men lined up for the kickoff.

**Ruling:** Kickoff A30. Too many men in the formation. If either team has more than 11 men in the formation with the play clock running, the officials should blow their whistles immediately and not allow the kick.

**A.R. 6.43 ONSIDE KICK—DOUBLE FOUL WITH A CHANGE**

On a grounded onside kick from the A35, A1 blocks B1 at the A43 while the ball is at the A44. B2 then recovers the ball at the A43 and returns it to the A20. During the return, B3 blocks A3 below the waist at the A30.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A45, or Team B can choose to replay the down. This is a double foul with a change of possession. A1's block is illegal because it occurred in the first 10 yards, and the ball had not been legally touched. The location of the ball when the block occurs is irrelevant.

**A.R. 6.44 ONSIDE KICK—KICKER GOES OUT OF BOUNDS—TEAM A RECOVERY**

On an onside kick from the A35, A2 touches the ball at the A46, and A2 then recovers the ball at the A44. A2 had stepped on the sideline at the A40 and then reestablished inbounds before touching the ball.

**Ruling:** Re-kick A30. On free kicks, a member of the kicking team who has been out of bounds cannot touch the kick until the ball has been touched by a member of the receiving team. The illegal touching foul cannot be enforced from the dead ball spot, because Team A is in legal possession at the end of the down. The foul for illegal touching must be enforced from the previous spot. If A2 had stepped out of bounds to avoid a block, it would also be a foul for voluntarily going out of bounds.

**A.R. 6.45 KICKING TEAM ILLEGAL FORMATION—KICK OUT OF BOUNDS OR NOT REACHING LANDING ZONE**

On a kickoff from the A35, A5 **moves his feet while the ball is in the air. The untouched kick goes out of bounds or hits the ground short of the landing zone at the B32.**

**Ruling:** Re-kick A30 for the illegal formation, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B40 for the kickoff out of bounds **or not reaching the landing zone.**

**Note:** The five-yard penalty for illegal formation cannot be added on from the B40, because only one of the fouls, (kickoff out of bounds/**not reaching landing zone**, or illegal formation), can be enforced. It could be enforced from the out of bounds spot or the spot it hit short of the landing zone (B32), but the kickoff out of bounds/**not reaching landing zone** enforcement is more beneficial.

**A.R. 6.46 KICKOFF—DOUBLE FOUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

A1's kickoff from the A35 is caught by B1 at: (a) the B2; or (b) in B's end zone. B1 returns the ball to the B45 where A1 tackles him by the facemask. During the return, B2 held A5 at the B30.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on the B30. This is a double foul after a change of possession. The fouls offset at the spot Team B's foul would be enforced if it were the only foul on the play. In this case, that is the spot of B's foul or the dead ball spot, whichever is least advantageous for Team B.



**A.R. 6.47 KICKOFF—BATTED BY TEAM B INTO TEAM A PLAYER AND BALL GOES OUT OF BOUNDS**

A1's kickoff is muffed by B1 at the B18 and is bouncing near the sideline at the B25, B1 dives to recover the ball and bats it backward into A2 where it bounces off his leg and goes out of bounds at the B22.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 B22. This is a legal bat by B1, since it was backward, and A2 is deemed not to have touched the ball, since it was batted into him. It is therefore not a "kickoff out of bounds last touched by Team A."

**A.R. 6.48 ONSIDE KICK—TEAM B PLAYER ENTERS SETUP ZONE BEFORE KICK**

On an onside kick from the A35, Team B has nine players in the setup zone and player B3 is on the B39, just outside the setup zone. Just before the ball is kicked, B3 steps on the B40-yard line. B1 recovers the onside kick at the A46.

**Ruling:** A's ball, re-kick from the A40. Illegal formation for Team B having more than nine players in the setup zone at the time of the kick.

**A.R. 6.49 ONSIDE KICK—ILLEGAL FORMATION BY TEAM A**

On A's kickoff from the A35, Team A has five players to the right of the kicker and five players to the left, all legally set. As the kicker approaches the ball, the wind blows the ball off the tee. Team A brings A1, the widest man, from outside the yard-line numbers in to be the holder. This leaves Team A with just one player outside the yard-line numbers on that side. The kick is recovered B4 at the A47.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A42 or re-kick A30. Illegal formation. Even though the holder counts toward either side for the purpose of five on each side, Team A must still have two players outside the yard-line numbers and two players, (other than the holder), between the inbounds line and the yard-line numbers.

**A.R. 6.50 KICKOFF—LEGAL/ILLEGAL FORMATION BY TEAM A**

As the kicker approaches the ball on a kickoff from the A35, kicking team player A2 is lined up with his (a) hand on the B40 yard-line, in a three-point stance; or (b) foot on the B40 yard-line in a two-point stance. The ball is kicked through the end zone.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B35 or re-kick A30. **Illegal formation** by Team A. **Team A players, other than the kicker, must be lined up with their front foot on the kicking team's restraining line, and both feet must remain on the ground from the time the kicker begins his approach to the ball and until the ball touches the ground or a player in the landing zone or end zone.**

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. Legal formation.

**A.R. 6.51 KICKOFF—BLOCK IN BACK BY TEAM A**

On a kickoff or safety kick, the ball hits the ground in front of return man B7 at the B10, where he picks it up and runs it to the 50. A2 pushes B3 in the back (a) at the B17 as he scrambles for the ball after it has hit the ground; or (b) at the B20 while B7 is running with the ball.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. There is no foul for a block in the back when a player is making a personal attempt to recover a loose ball, he is eligible to touch or recover.

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. There is no foul for the kicking team blocking in the back during the return, as they are now the defense.

**A.R. 6.52 ONSIDE KICK – KICKER GOES OUT OF BOUNDS TO AVOID BLOCK**

On an onside kick from the A35, the ball bounces into the ground and then high into the air toward the sideline. B2 steps forward to block A7 near the sideline at the A43, to allow B4 to attempt to catch the kick behind him. A7 goes around B2's block by stepping on the sideline at the A43 and reestablishing inbounds at the A45. B4 muffs the kick and A7 recovers the ball at the A46.

**Ruling:** Re-kick A30. A kicking team player may not go out of bounds to avoid a block until the ball is touched by the receiving team or the kick ends. This is a foul on a free kick, and a five-yard penalty. There is no option to enforce the penalty from the dead ball spot because A is in legal possession at the end of the down. There is no foul for A7 touching the ball after being out of bounds because it was touched by B before the recovery. If B had recovered, the yardage could be enforced from the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 6.53 ONSIDE KICK — USE OF DECOY KICKER**

On a free kick from the A35, Team A lines up in a legal formation with six players to the left side of the ball and five on the right, all within one yard of the A35. The two players nearest the ball are bunched close so it is not clear which one is the kicker. The inside man on the left side (the sixth player on that side) begins approaching the ball as if he is going to kick it. Instead, he runs past the ball and lines up stationary on the right side at the A34. Another player from the right side then begins his approach and kicks the ball into the ground. At the time the second player began his approach to the ball, there are 5 players stationary, each with a foot on the 34-yard line, on each side of the ball. The kick is recovered by A4 at the A47.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A47. When the "kicker" started moving forward to kick the ball, the other ten Team A Players were legally set between the 34 and 35-yard lines. The "decoy" player was not the "kicker," and the formation must be legal when the actual kicker begins his approach to the ball.



## RULE 7 BALL IN PLAY, DEAD BALL, SCRIMMAGE

### ENCROACHMENT/DELAY OF GAME DEFENSE

#### A.R. 7.1 DELAY BY THE DEFENSE—ABRUPT MOVEMENT

Third-and-10 on B30. While Team A is at the line of scrimmage, and A1 is calling signals, defensive tackle B1: (a) abruptly moves in an effort to cause A2 to false start; or (b) misjudges the snap signal and moves forward into the neutral zone but backs out before the snap. There is no reaction by Team A players.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Third-and-5 on B25. Delay of game, defense. Blow the whistle and kill the play immediately, whether A2 or any offensive player reacts.
- (b) No foul.

#### A.R. 7.2 ENCROACHMENT—NOT ILLEGAL SNAP

Fourth-and-5 on 50. Nose guard B1 is lined up on the defensive side of the line of scrimmage with his right hand directly in front of the ball. Center A1 moves the ball forward a couple of inches in a normal snapping motion and contacts B1's hand.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Team B is not allowed to interfere with the normal snapping motion of the ball by the center. If, in the opinion of the officials, this is not a normal snapping motion, the foul would be on the offense for an illegal snap, but in either case, the play would be shut down. (7-4-3)

### NEUTRAL ZONE INFRACTION

#### A.R. 7.3 DEFENSIVE PLAYER MOVES INTO NEUTRAL ZONE—STOPS—BACKS OUT AT SNAP

Second-and-10 on A30. Defensive left end B2 takes two quick steps into the neutral zone and is even with right tackle A3 but stops and starts to back out when the ball is snapped. No offensive players react and A1 throws an incomplete pass.

**Ruling:** Second-and-5 on A35. Defense offside. Since the defensive player stopped his forward movement, the play is not shut down for unimpeded to the quarterback and is penalized as defense offside.

#### A.R. 7.4 ELIGIBLE ON THE LINE MOVES FORWARD/BACKWARD JUST PRIOR TO SNAP

Second-and-5 on B40. Wideout A2, on the line of scrimmage, takes a slight step forward or backward just prior to the snap.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on B45. It is a false start, and the play should be shut down if a receiver, on the line of scrimmage, is moving forward or backward from the line of scrimmage prior to the snap, and he is unable re-set legally before the snap.

#### A.R. 7.5 TEAM A PLAYERS MOVING AT SNAP

Third-and-10 on B30. With the clock running any time during the game, all members of the offense get fully set for one second; as the ball is snapped, **in a non-abrupt motion** and without again getting reset: (a) left guard A2; (b) tight end A3; (c) wingback A5; (d) tailback A6, is going from a two-point stance to a three-point stance; (e) wide receiver A4 is moving from on the line either forward or backward; (f) wide receiver A4 is moving from off the line of scrimmage up to the line of scrimmage or (g) wide receiver A4 is moving on the line to another position on the line (laterally). A1's pass falls incomplete.

**Rulings:**

(a), (b), (c), (e), and (f): Third-and-15 on B35. False start. If it occurs after the two-minute warning of either half, there is also the potential for a 10-second runoff. (7-4-2)

**(d) Fourth-and-10 on B30; A6's actions are not a foul as long as they are not abrupt or forward. (7-4-2)**

**It is illegal motion if a player on the line of scrimmage is moving to another position on the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. (7-4-8). It is a false start if he is on the line of scrimmage and is changing his stance (three point to two, or two point to three) when the ball is snapped.**

#### A.R. 7.6 DEFENSIVE PLAYER FAKES CHARGE, BUT DOES NOT ENTER NEUTRAL ZONE

Third-and-8 on B24. Linebacker B6 fakes a charge but does not enter the neutral zone. Tackle A5 who is directly opposite B6 immediately reacts.

**Ruling:** Third-and-13 on B29. Blow the play dead. False start. (7-4-2)

#### A.R. 7.7 FALSE START OR NEUTRAL ZONE INFRACTION

Second-and-7 on A30. Defensive right end B1 jumps into the neutral zone outside the tight end, causing A3 to flinch. A3 is: (a) a wingback located directly opposite B1; (b) a fullback; (c) a receiver located seven yards outside B1 with no offensive player in between them; (d) a wide receiver located 15 yards outside B1 and outside slotback A2 with no one other than A2 located between them; or (e) the quarterback (who takes a step back as a result of B1's action).

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-2 on A35. Neutral zone infraction. Wingback is protected if within 2½ positions. (7-4-4-b)
- (b) Second-and-12 on A25. False start. Running back or fullback are not protected. (7-4-2)
- (c) Second-and-2 on A35. Neutral zone infraction. All flexed receivers on same side of ball are protected. (7-4-4-b)
- (d) Second-and-2 on A35. Neutral zone infraction. All flexed receivers on same side of ball are protected. (7-4-4-b)
- (e) Second-and-12 on A25. False start. (7-4-2). Although the QB is "protected," the action by B1 occurred more than 2½ positions outside the QB.

- A.R. 7.8 DEFENSIVE PLAYER MOVES INTO NEUTRAL ZONE—NO TEAM A PLAYER REACTS—BALL IS SNAPPED**  
Third-and-5 on A45. Defensive right end moves into the neutral zone before the snap and is even with the tackle and continuing forward, as the ball is snapped.  
**Ruling:** First-and-10 on the 50. This play must be shut down for unimpeded to the QB. Whenever a defensive player gets offside and is continuing forward before the snap, the play should be killed for a neutral zone infraction.

**FALSE START—LEGAL AND ILLEGAL MOTION—ILLEGAL SHIFT**

- A.R. 7.9 ILLEGAL MOTION OR FALSE START**  
Second-and-10 on B40. At any time in the game, (after all 11 players have been set for one second) as the ball is snapped, (a) right tackle A2 is going from a two-point to a three-point stance; (b) eligible receiver A3 is going from a two-point to a three-point stance while on **the line of scrimmage**; or (c) deep back A4 is rolling forward as the ball is snapped. A1 is sacked at the B46.  
**Rulings:**  
(a), (b), and (c) Second-and-15 on B45. False start. (7-4-2). (Run 10 seconds if the other criteria are satisfied).

***Note:** An eligible receiver not on the line of scrimmage who changes his stance does not have to come to a complete stop prior to the snap, as long as his actions are not abrupt (false start) or forward (illegal motion).*

- A.R. 7.10 ABRUPT HAND MOVEMENT BY QB—FALSE START**  
Third-and-4 on A20. Shotgun QBA1 thrusts his hands forward in an exaggerated manner in an attempt to draw Team B offside. No one from Team B reacts.  
**Ruling:** Third-and-9 on A15. Blow the play dead immediately. False start, regardless of the lack of a reaction by the defense.

- A.R. 7.11 ABRUPT MOVEMENT ON SHIFT—FALSE START**  
Third-and-3 on B5. Prior to the snap, left wingback A8 and left tight end A9 abruptly move from the left side of the formation to the right side. This action causes nose guard B3, who is aligned directly across from the Center, to move into the neutral zone. The ball is snapped with B3 in the neutral zone, and A1 immediately takes a knee.  
**Ruling:** Third-and-8 on B10. False start. Any shift by the offense must be made in a non-abrupt manner. The play should be blown dead.

- A.R. 7.12 QUARTERBACK TAKES POSITION UNDER GUARD—SNAP**  
Second-and-5 on A35. Quarterback A1 accidentally takes a position under the left guard, and the center then snaps the ball. B2 recovers the ball on the A25 and is downed there.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A25. Decline the foul for illegal formation.

***Note:** The T-Formation Quarterback is given the ability to take a position behind the center that is neither clearly on nor clearly off the line of scrimmage. In exchange, he is required to be clearly off the line of scrimmage, (more than a yard of "daylight"), if he is behind any offensive lineman other than the center at the snap. Failure to do so is illegal formation. Additionally, if the QB starts from a position as a T-Formation Quarterback (one yard or less of "daylight") and moves from that position, he must come set for at least a full second, before the ball is snapped. Failure to do so is illegal motion.*

- A.R. 7.13 QUARTERBACK TAKES POSITION UNDER GUARD—CALLS SIGNALS**  
Second-and-4 on B36. Quarterback A1 extends his hands under the right guard and starts calling signals. A1 then realizes his mistake and moves to the center, and subsequently throws an incomplete pass.  
**Ruling:** Third-and-4 on B36. There is no foul on A1 while he is mistakenly behind someone other than the center unless the ball is snapped while A1 is behind someone other than the center.

- A.R. 7.14 BALL SNAPPED WITH QUARTERBACK BEHIND CENTER**  
Second-and-10 on B40. While quarterback A1 is standing immediately behind the center, or has his hands under center, calling audibles, the ball is snapped and: (a) glances off A1's leg; or (b) does not touch the quarterback, and rolls into the backfield. In both (a) and (b), A2 recovers at the B45 and runs for a touchdown.  
**Rulings:** (a) and (b): Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. Unless there is a false start or other snap infraction, a snap from center is a backward pass, regardless of whether a Team A player is in position to receive it, and the ball continues in play, regardless of the time remaining in the game (8-7-1).

- A.R. 7.15 SNAP WITH NO PLAYER IN POSITION TO RECEIVE HAND-TO-HAND SNAP**  
Second-and-10 on A20. T-Formation Quarterback QBA1 moves to a position in the backfield, however, before A1 has reset for a full second, the ball is snapped: (a) to backfield player A2 who runs to the A30; (b) and muffed by A2 and bounces back up into his hands, and he then runs to the A18; (c) over A2's head and is rolling on the ground where it is recovered by B3 at the A10.  
**Rulings:**  
(a) Second-and-15 on A15. Illegal motion because the T-Formation Quarterback failed to reset in the backfield for a full second;  
(b) Second-and-15 on A15, or third-and-12 on A18.  
(c) B's ball, first-and-goal on A10. Decline the foul for illegal motion.

**A.R. 7.16 BALL SNAPPED THROUGH QUARTERBACK'S LEGS**

Third-and-10 on B40. T-Formation Quarterback A1 lines up with his hands in position to receive a hand-to-hand snap, but the center snaps the ball through A1's legs to tailback A2. A2 runs with the ball to the B25.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B25. Legal play. Even if the quarterback is lined up as a T-Formation Quarterback, the ball need not be snapped to him (8-7-1).

**A.R. 7.17 T-FORMATION QUARTERBACK GOES IN MOTION - SETS/DOES NOT SET FOR A SECOND**

Third-and-10 on A30. T-formation quarterback A1 is at the line calling signals. Before the ball is snapped, he walks away from center calling to the bench as though he has the wrong personnel. When he is several yards away from the center, and clearly more than a yard behind the line of scrimmage, the ball is snapped to tailback A2 who runs for a touchdown. When the ball is snapped, A1: (a) is still moving or has just stopped; or (b) has come to a complete stop for a full second before the ball is snapped.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Third-and-15 on A25. Illegal motion because the T-Formation Quarterback has failed to reset in the backfield for a full second.
- (b) Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. If the quarterback sets for a full second, he has legally changed to a backfield position, so the action is legal.

**A.R. 7.18 QB MOVING FORWARD AT THE SNAP FROM SHOTGUN FORMATION**

Second-and-3 on A40. QBA1 walks forward from a shotgun position toward the line of scrimmage to call an audible. The ball is snapped while A1 is moving and is recovered by A2 who runs out of bounds at the A45.

**Ruling:** Second-and-8 on A35. If the QB is moving toward the line of scrimmage at the snap it is a foul for illegal motion, and the ball remains alive (7-4-8).

**A.R. 7.19 PLAYER IN MOTION—TEAMMATE GIVES ARM SIGNALS/TAPS CENTER**

Third-and-2 on A23. Prior to the ball being snapped: (a) back A2 legally goes in motion; back A4, who is lined up as the deep back, gives signals by moving his arms while A2 is in motion; (b) left guard A5 who is looking back at the QB, turns and taps the center. A3 runs to the A31.

**Ruling:** (a) and (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on A31. The action by A4 and A5 is legal.

**A.R. 7.20 ILLEGAL SHIFT**

First-and-10 on B30. As team A breaks the huddle, wideout A2 goes to the wrong side of the formation, and before he sets, Quarterback A1 tells him to go to the other side of the formation. All other Team A players had been set for one second. The ball is snapped while A2 is still moving two yards outside of the tackle. The pass is complete to A2 at the B5.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-15 on B35. Illegal shift. All Team A players must come to a complete stop simultaneously for one second after a shift or huddle. If this occurred after the 2-minute warning with the game clock running, it would convert to a false start and the play would be shut down at the snap with a potential 10-second runoff.

**A.R. 7.21 FORMATION—LEGAL BEFORE AND AFTER SHIFT—CONFUSION BY OFFENSE**

Third-and-10 on B40. As Team A comes to the line, split end A2 is clearly two yards off the line of scrimmage, leaving ineligible A4 as the end man on the line of scrimmage. As quarterback A1 calls signals: (a) Team A executes a designed shift, moving A2 up to the line "covering" ineligible A4, and tailback A3 moves into the slot, two yards off the line of scrimmage; or (b) before the ball is snapped, A2 realizes that he is lined up in the wrong place, so he moves up to the line, "covering" ineligible A4. After a full second, the ball is snapped, and A1 scrambles to the B20.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Third-and-15 on B45. Illegal formation. Offense must present a legal formation both before and after a shift.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B20. When the offense has clearly just mistakenly lined up in the wrong place, and it is corrected before the snap, there is no foul (7-4-7).

**A.R. 7.22 SWINGING GATE ON FIELD GOAL—CENTER DOES/DOES NOT REPORT**

Fourth-and-3 on B20. On a field goal attempt, center A5 lines up on the end of the line in the middle of the field. Holder A2 and kicker A1 line up directly behind A5. The rest of the team is lined up at the inbounds line 15 yards away from center A5. The ball is snapped by A5 to up-back A4, who is lined up behind the rest of the line at the inbounds spot. A5 did not snap the ball through his legs. A4 runs to the B5 where he is tackled. Center A5: (a) reported as eligible prior to the snap; or (b) A5 did not report as eligible prior to the snap.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-goal on B5. Legal formation, provided that all other numbering requirements are met. The snap does not have to go through the snapper's legs.
- (b) Fourth-and-8 on B25. Illegal formation.

**DOWN BY CONTACT / NOT DOWN BY CONTACT**

**A.R. 7.23 DOWN BY CONTACT**

Third-and-6 on B30. Runner A1 goes around end and is knocked off balance by B1 at the B28. A1 staggers and falls to a knee at the B26, fumbles, and A3 recovers at the B20.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-2 on B26. Down by contact.

**A.R. 7.24 RUNNER SLIDES TO GIVE HIMSELF UP - FEET FIRST/SIDEWAYS/HEADFIRST**

Third-and-10 on A15. QBA1 scrambles out of the pocket and runs up field. As he nears the A25 he sees that he is going to be tackled so he (a) slides feet first with the ball at the A23, (b) slides sideways with the ball at the 23 ½, or (c) dives headfirst and his right knee hits the ground with the ball at the A24 and he slides to the A25. In (a), (b) and (c), he is not contacted by a defender.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Fourth-and-2 on A23.
- (b) Fourth-and-1½ on A23½.
- (c) Fourth-and-1 on A24.

**Note:** When a runner intentionally goes to the ground, he is afforded protection from defensive contact to his body, (if the slide was early enough), and always to the head and neck area. The ball is placed where it was when the runner's first body part other than a hand or foot, hits the ground.

**A.R. 7.25 DOWN BY CONTACT/OR NOT - SLIDING RUNNER**

Third-and-goal on A5. Runner A3 (any player in possession of the football) goes to the ground as he is trying to reach the goal line. The ball is at the one-yard line when A3's knee touches the ground, and A3 then slides untouched into the end zone with the ball. (a) A3 intentionally went to the ground, sliding feet first toward the goal line; (b) A3 intentionally went to the ground, diving head first toward the goal line with the ball stretched ahead of him; (c) A3 stumbled at the 5-yard line, which caused him to unintentionally go to the ground, before sliding across the goal line; or (d) A3 simulates going to the ground by starting a slide at the B3, remains upright, and runs into the end zone.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Fourth-and-goal on A1. Because A3 intentionally went to the ground, the ball is down at the forward point of the ball at the time a body part other than A3's hand or foot touches the ground.
- (b) Fourth-and-goal on A1. Whether a runner slides feet first or headfirst, if the runner goes to the ground intentionally, the ball is down at the forward point of the ball at the time a body part other than A3's hand or foot touches the ground.
- (c) Touchdown A, kickoff A35. Because A3 did not intentionally go to the ground, he is not down by contact until touched down by a defender. Therefore, when he slides across the goal line with the ball, untouched by a defender, it is a touchdown.
- (d) Fourth-and-goal on B3. When a runner simulates sliding feet or head first, the ball is dead when he begins to simulate the slide.

**A.R. 7.26 DOWN BY CONTACT/OR NOT—IN AIR COLLISION WITH OPPONENT**

First-and-10 on A40. A2 and B3 both jump up at the B30 in a legal attempt to catch a pass and collide in midair: (a) A2 controls the ball and immediately falls down at the B30. He gets up and runs to the B20; (b) they fall separately after the collision, after which A2 controls the pass and falls to the ground. He gets up and runs to the B15; (c) they fall to the ground without the ball, and the ball is lying on B3's back (ball has not touched the ground). A2 reaches over and takes the ball off B3's back and runs to the B20.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on B30. Down by contact.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Legal advance.
- (c) A's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Legal advance.

**A.R. 7.27 DOWN BY CONTACT OR NOT—OPPONENT TOUCHES RUNNER'S HAIR, JERSEY, OR TOWEL**

First-and-10 on A25. A2 dives for and catches a pass at the A30, jumps to his feet, and runs to the 50 where he runs out of bounds. While A2 is still on the ground at the A30, B1 reaches and touches: (a) A2's hair, the hood of a sweatshirt under the jersey, or jersey; or (b) A2's towel that is hanging from his belt, but he touches no other part of A2's body; or (c) any item that is not part of the standard uniform.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-5 on A30. Down by contact.
- (b) First-and-10 on 50. Not down by contact.
- (c) First-and-10 on 50. Not down by contact.

**A.R. 7.28 DOWN BY CONTACT—OPPONENT TAKING BALL**

First-and-10 on A40. A2 and B3 collide in air at the B30 as both legally go for a pass. They fall to the ground without the ball, and then A2 possesses the ball while lying on the ground. After a momentary pause, B3 reaches over and takes the ball from A2.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B30. An attempt by an opponent to take the ball away from a player who is in possession of the ball and on the ground, will put that player down by contact (7-2-1-f).

**A.R. 7.29 NOT DOWN BY CONTACT—LEGAL ADVANCE**

First-and-10 on B30. On a backward pass, A1 catches the ball and is knocked off-balance by B2 on the B36. A1 regains his balance, runs to the B32, stumbles to one knee, and then falls to the ground on the B28. A1 then gets up and scores.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35.

**A.R. 7.30 NOT DOWN BY CONTACT—FUMBLE**

Third-and-10 on B40. A1 runs to the B25 where he slips and falls to the ground. The ball slides out of A1's hand and (a) rests on his arm while A1 is on the ground; or (b) is loose near the sideline and touches the towel only of B2 who is on the ground out of bounds, but his towel is on the ground inbounds. B1, while on his feet inbounds, reaches in, picks up the ball, and is tackled at the 50.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on 50.

- (a) Runner A1 is not down by contact as he did not have possession of the ball when B1 took it. Team B may advance with the fumble (7-2-1-f);
- (b) the ball is not out of bounds since it only touched the towel, which is not part of B2's standard uniform.

**Note:** If a loose ball touches something that is not a standard part of a player's uniform, such as a towel, that touching is ignored. Similarly, if that same item touches a boundary line or a goal line, such touching is also ignored and does not put the player out of bounds or behind the goal line.

**A.R. 7.31 NOT DOWN BY CONTACT—TEAMMATE TAKES BALL FROM PLAYER ON GROUND**

Second-and-3 on A45. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the 50 where he slips and falls to the ground. Immediately after falling to the ground, A4 takes the ball from A2 and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35.

**Note:** The restrictions stated in 7-2-1-f (taking the ball from a player) do not apply to a teammate. However, the player on the ground may not hand the ball forward to a teammate.

**ERRONEOUS WHISTLE**

**A.R. 7.32 ERRONEOUS WHISTLE—FOUL**

Second-and-15 on A30. With the clock running at the snap, back A2 runs to the 50 and fumbles the ball. During the scramble for the loose ball, the Back Judge erroneously blows the whistle. B2 falls on the ball at the B45. During A2's run, (a) A4 holds at the A38; or (b) A4 clips at the A38.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-15 on A30. If Team A elects to replay the down, the offensive hold is disregarded, and the down is replayed. The game clock is reset to what it was at the time of the snap, and it then starts on the snap. If Team A chooses to put the ball in play where possession was lost, the offensive hold will be enforced as normal, which results in second-and-17 on A28, the clock is reset to what it was at the time of the fumble, and the clock starts on the ready for play.
- (b) Second-and-22 on A23. If Team A elects to put the ball in play where possession was lost, the foul is enforced as normal from the A38, the game clock is reset to what it was at the time of the fumble, and it starts on the ready for play. If Team A elects to replay the down, the personal foul is enforced from the previous spot, which results in second-and-30 on A15, the game clock is reset to what it was at the time of the snap, and it then starts on the snap.

**Note:** If the down is replayed after an erroneous whistle, only personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are enforced, and by rule, they are enforced from the previous spot. If the down is not replayed, all fouls are enforced as normal.

**A.R. 7.33 ERRONEOUS WHISTLE—FUMBLE OWN END ZONE**

Second-and-16 on A6. The clock is running, and the ball is snapped at 1:25 in the 4th quarter. A1's fumble at the A5 rolls into the end zone. The Referee erroneously blows the whistle as the ball is loose in the end zone. A2 recovers in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Second-and-16 on A6. Replay the down. The game clock is reset to what it was at the snap, (1:25), and it next starts on the snap. The play clock is set to 25 seconds. Team A's other option would be to take the ball at the spot possession was lost, the A5, which they would not do.

**A.R. 7.34 ERRONEOUS WHISTLE—FUMBLE OPPONENT'S END ZONE**

First-and-goal on B5. With the clock running at the snap, A1's fumble at the B7 rolls into the end zone where A2 recovers. When the ball was loose in the end zone, the Back Judge erroneously blew the whistle.

**Ruling:** First-and-goal on B5. Replay the down. The game clock is reset to what it was at the time of the snap, starts on the snap, and the play clock is set to 25 seconds (7-2-1-o-2).

**A.R. 7.35 ERRONEOUS WHISTLE—FUMBLE OPPONENT'S END ZONE**

First-and-goal on B5. With the clock at 1:25 and stopped prior to the snap, A1 runs to the B2 and fumbles the ball into the end zone. The fumble occurs with 1:20 on the clock. As the ball is rolling loose in the end zone, the Back Judge erroneously blows the whistle with 1:15 on the clock. A2 recovers the ball in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Team A's option: First-and-goal on B5. Reset the clock to 1:25, (what it was at the time of the snap), and the clock then starts on the snap; or second-and-goal on B2. Reset the clock to 1:20, (what it was at the time of the fumble), and the clock starts on the ready for play. In both cases, the play clock is set to 25 seconds.

**A.R. 7.36 ERRONEOUS WHISTLE—KICK IN THE AIR**

Fourth-and-10 on A30. With the clock running at the snap, A1 punts the ball from the A15, and while the kick is in the air at the 50, the Line Judge erroneously blows the whistle. B3 catches the punt and returns it to the A40.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-10 on A30. Replay the down. Reset the clock to what it was at the time of the snap, and the clock starts on the snap. The play clock is set to 25 seconds.

**A.R. 7.37      ERRONEOUS WHISTLE—DURING A FUMBLE—AFTER A CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-10 on A30. B1 catches A1's punt at the B40 and returns to the B45 where he fumbles the ball to the 50 where A2 recovers. The back Judge erroneously blows the whistle during the fumble when the ball is at the B47.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Team B was last in possession before the whistle, so they have the option to take the ball at the spot possession was lost or replay the down. The game clock starts on the snap because of the change of possession, and the play clock is set to 25 seconds.

**A.R. 7.38      ERRONEOUS WHISTLE—TEAM A FOUL IN ITS END ZONE**

Second-and-15 on A6. Quarterback A1 attempts to hand off to back A2, who drops the ball. It rolls into the end zone and the Line Judge erroneously blows the whistle while the ball is in the end zone. (a) A2 clips in the end zone before the whistle blew or (b) A2 holds in the end zone before the whistle blew.

**Rulings:**

(a) Second-and-18 on A3. Team A will elect to replay the down, so the game clock is reset to what it was at the time of the snap, the play clock is set to 25 seconds, and the game clock starts on the snap. If the down is replayed, as it is here, the only fouls that are enforced are personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, and the enforcement is from the previous spot.

(b) Second-and-15 on A6. Team A will elect to replay the down, so the game clock is reset to what it was at the time of the snap, the play clock is set to 25 seconds, and the game clock starts on the snap. Since the down is being replayed, and only personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are enforced on a replay of the down, the holding foul is not enforced.

***Note:** If the down is replayed due to an erroneous whistle, by rule, any fouls that are enforced are done so from the previous spot, rather than from their normal enforcement spot, had there not been an erroneous whistle.*

**FUMBLE—OUT OF BOUNDS / OUT OF END ZONE/AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

**A.R. 7.39      INTERCEPTION—FUMBLE OUT OF BOUNDS—TOUCHBACK**

First-and-goal on B7. B2 intercepts a pass in the end zone, is tackled, fumbles, and the ball goes out of bounds on the B3.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback (8-7-3-Item 3-c).

**A.R. 7.40      PUNT—FUMBLE OUT OF BOUNDS—TOUCHBACK**

Fourth-and-8 on B49. B3 catches a punt in the end zone. He attempts to run in the end zone, fumbles, and the ball goes out of bounds over the end line.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback (8-7-3-Item 4-b).

**A.R. 7.41      FUMBLE OUT OF BOUNDS—FORWARD**

Second-and-5 on B30. A3 takes a handoff and runs to the B26 and fumbles. The ball touches the Line Judge who is standing on the sideline at the B25. The ball then rolls to the B22 where B2 falls on the ball.

**Ruling:** Third-and-1 on B26. Fumble forward out of bounds. A loose ball is dead when it touches anything, including a game official, on the sideline. Return the ball to the spot of the fumble and wind the clock on the Referee's signal that the ball has been returned the field of play (8-7-3-Item 3-b).

**A.R. 7.42      FUMBLE INSIDE TWO MINUTES**

Second-and-goal on B6. Thirty seconds remain in the game. A2 runs to the left and is tackled at the B4 and fumbles with the ball going into the end zone. A3 recovers the ball in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Third-and-goal on B4. The clock will stop upon the recovery and will restart on the Referee's signal as the ball is brought back into the field of play.

**A.R. 7.43      FUMBLE FORWARD OUT OF BOUNDS—AFTER TWO MINUTE WARNING**

First-and-10 on A35. Twenty seconds remain in the game. A2 runs to his left, fumbles the ball at the A32, and it rolls out of bounds at the A35.

**Ruling:** Second-and-thirteen on A32. The clock will stop when the ball rolls out of bounds and will restart on the Referee's signal as another ball is being brought into the field and before it is spotted at the inbounds line.

**MISCELLANEOUS SCRIMMAGE PLAYS**

**A.R. 7.44      ENTIRE BALL NOT OUT OF END ZONE - FOUL BY TEAM A IN THEIR END ZONE**

First-and-10 on A5. A1 circles back in the end zone to avoid tacklers. A1 is contacted by B1 in the end zone and fumbles the ball. While the ball is loose, A3 clips in the end zone, and A4 recovers the ball on the goal line. The back of the ball is still in A's end zone.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick A10. The result of the play is a safety, and the personal foul carries over to the safety kick.

**A.R. 7.45      LOCKED LEGS—LEGAL**

Third-and-5 on B30. Guard A1 interlocks his leg with tackle A2. A legal forward pass is completed to A3 who is downed on the B6.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-goal on B6. It is legal to interlock legs (7-5-1).

**A.R. 7.46 HOLDER—EXTENDS HANDS FOR THE SNAP—SNAP GOES TO THE KICKER**

Fourth-and-5 on B14. Holder A1 is kneeling as the apparent holder for a field goal attempt. He extends his hands, but the snap goes to kicker A2 who throws a forward pass to end A3 who catches it in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35 (7-6-4).

**A.R. 7.47 RUNNER TAKES HIS HELMET OFF**

Second-and-5 on B45. QBA1 completes a pass to end A2 at the B20 with no defenders in the area. A2 then runs toward the goal line, and at the B5, he takes his helmet off in celebration and holds it up in the air and backs into the end zone. He then crosses the goal line.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B20. The ball is dead by rule when the runner's helmet comes off at the B5. A2's actions are also taunting. That foul is enforced from the dead ball spot, and it is first-and-10 after enforcement. The foul is the first qualifying foul toward potential disqualification of A2.

**A.R. 7.48 PASS STRIKES OFFICIAL'S FLAG**

Second-and-5 on A40. QBA1 from the pocket throws a pass toward end A2 at the B40 yard line near the sideline. Prior to the pass, B2 chucked A2 at the A48 yard line with QBA1 still in the pocket. The Side Judge throws his flag, and the pass hits the official's flag in flight and falls incomplete at the B40.

**Ruling:** Second-and-5 on A40. An official's flag in flight is considered "any other object" and the down is replayed by rule. The game clock is reset to the time at the snap, the play clock is set to 25 seconds, and the game clock will start on the snap. Personal and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are enforced from the previous spot. All other fouls are disregarded.

**A.R. 7.49 BALL PLACEMENT AFTER TURNOVER ON DOWNS**

Fourth-and-2 on B4. The forward point of the ball is on the four-yard line. A1 carries the ball but is stopped for no gain. The forward point of the ball is still on the four-yard line.

**Ruling:** Though possession of the ball has changed, the position of the ball remains where it became dead. The chains are moved to be aligned with what has become the forward point of the ball, which is between the four and five-yard line.



## **RULE 8 FORWARD PASS, BACKWARD PASS, FUMBLE**

The following mechanics and interpretations pertain to Offensive Pass Interference and Illegal Contact:

- (a) Actions by eligible receivers, such as pushing off to gain separation and blocking downfield before the pass is touched, are Offensive Pass Interference and will be strictly enforced.
- (b) When the official sees illegal contact, he/she will look to the quarterback. If the quarterback is out of the pocket, or if the ball is clearly in the air, illegal contact will not be called, though it may be a foul for defensive pass interference.
- (c) If the quarterback still has the ball or is in the throwing motion, or if he is in the process of being sacked, illegal contact (quarterback in the pocket) will be called.

### **FORWARD PASS—COMPLETE/INCOMPLETE**

#### **A.R. 8.1 COMPLETE/INCOMPLETE**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 leaps to catch a pass at the A31, touches one foot there, and drags the other at the A30. A2 is contacted by B1 at the A31 and falls out of bounds. He does not lose the ball on contact with the ground.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 at A31. Completed catch.

#### **A.R. 8.2 PASS COMPLETE**

Second-and-10 on A30. A2 catches a pass in stride near the sideline at the A45 and turns up field. His first two steps are inbounds, but his third step is out of bounds. After his third step comes down, he drops the ball.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on A45. The pass is complete. After he had the ball long enough to become a runner, he fumbled the ball out of bounds.

#### **A.R. 8.3 PASS COMPLETE—NOT OUT OF BOUNDS**

First-and-10 on A20. Airborne A2 controls a pass, and his right foot touches the ground inbounds, then his left foot steps on B2 at the A40, who is on the ground contacting the sideline. A2 then continues for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35 (3-20-1).

#### **A.R. 8.4 PASS CONTROLLED—CONTACT IN AIR**

Second-and-10 on A15. A1 throws a long pass to the B45 where B2 and A2 go up together trying to catch the pass. (a) A2 and B2 collide in the air with both of them touching the ball, but only after they separate in the air does A2 get possession of the ball; (b) A2 controls the ball in the air, but before he comes down to the ground, contact by B2 jars the ball loose from A2's hands. After separating from contact with B2, A2 regains control of the ball either before or after hitting the ground; or (c) after A2 gains control of the ball in the air, he is contacted in the air by B2. In all situations listed, A2 falls to the ground at the B45 after losing contact with B2, and then gets up (untouched) and runs for a touchdown.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35.
- (b) Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35.
- (c) First-and-10 on B45.

#### **A.R. 8.5 PASS COMPLETE—CONTACT IN AIR—RECEIVER LANDS ON FEET**

First-and-10 on A20. A1 throws a high pass to end A2, who jumps and controls the ball in the air at the A32. B3 contacts A2 from behind and knocks him back to the A30 where he lands on his feet without anyone in contact with him. A2 scrambles and: (a) runs to the A36 where he is downed; or (b) runs to the A28 where he is downed.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on A36. If A2 breaks away, he is allowed to advance.
- (b) A's ball, second-and-2 on A28. If A2 breaks away, he is allowed to advance or lose yardage (7-2-1-a).

#### **A.R. 8.6 ILLEGAL CHUCK OUT OF BOUNDS—NO IMMEDIATE RETURN—ILLEGAL TOUCH OF PASS**

First-and-10 on 50. Wide receiver A2 is illegally chucked out of bounds at the B40. A2 remains out of bounds and runs down the sideline until the end zone. He then reestablishes in the end zone and catches a touchdown pass.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Offsetting fouls for illegal contact and illegally touching a pass. A2 must make an immediate attempt to return in bounds in order to be legally the first to touch the pass. If he does not, it is a foul for illegal touching.

#### **A.R. 8.7 PROCESS OF CATCH—BALL TOUCHES GROUND—COMPLETE/INCOMPLETE**

Second-and-5 on A35. A1 throws a forward pass to A2 at the A40. A2 dives for the ball and controls the ball in the air. The first thing to hit the ground is the point of the ball. (a) A2 briefly loses control of the ball when it hits the ground; or (b) A2 never loses control of the ball. (c) The ball moves slightly within control of A2

**Rulings:**

- (a) Third-and-5 on A35. Incomplete pass.
- (b) First-and-10 on A40. The receiver never lost control of the ball, so this is a catch.
- (c) First-and-10 on A40. If the ball moves within control of the receiver, he is deemed not to have lost control of the ball and it is a completed pass. If the receiver has to "chase" the ball, he is deemed to have lost control and the pass would be incomplete.

#### **A.R. 8.8 PROCESS OF THE CATCH—GOAL LINE—NO FOOTBALL MOVE**

First-and-10-on B25. A1 throws a pass to A2 who controls the ball and gets one foot and his right knee down, before he is contacted by B1. The contact by B1 sends him across the goal line and to the ground in the end zone. A2

makes no football move as he is going to the ground, but the ball crosses the goal line. The ball comes out as he hits the ground in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on B25. Incomplete. A2 did not perform, or have time to perform, a football move after getting his knee down, and he then lost control when he hit the ground. The fact that the ball crossed the goal line does not satisfy the requirements of a catch. Had he maintained control of the ball when he hit the ground in the end zone, it would have been a completed pass at the spot of the ball at the time A2 was contacted (with his knee down) by B1.

**A.R. 8.9 PROCESS OF THE CATCH—FOOTBALL MOVE**

First-and-10-on B25. A1 throws a pass to A2 who controls the ball, gets both feet down, and then turns toward the goal line. He takes one more step and then dives into the end zone. When he lands in the end zone, the ball comes out.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. The pass is complete. The receiver had the ball long enough to become a runner prior to going to the ground, so he does not have to maintain control when he lands in the end zone.

**A.R. 8.10 PROCESS OF THE CATCH—FOOTBALL MOVE**

First-and-10-on B25. A1 throws a pass to A2 who is contacted by a defender before he completes the catch at the three-yard line. Despite B2's contact, A2 keeps his balance, gets both feet down, tucks the ball, turns toward the goal line, and lunges into the end zone. The ball comes out as he hits the ground.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. The receiver had the ball long enough to become a runner prior to going to the ground, so he does not have to maintain control when he lands in the end zone.

**A.R. 8.11 PROCESS OF THE CATCH—FOOTBALL MOVE—NO DEFENSIVE CONTACT—RECEIVER LOSES BALL**

First-and-10 on the 50. A2 controls a pass in the air at the B40 with his left foot on the ground. He turns upfield as his second foot lands inbounds, and he reaches the ball forward to reach the line to gain. A2 is not contacted by any B player, and he loses the ball when he hits the ground at the B39. B3 recovers the ball and is tackled at the B38.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B38. A2 had completed the catch when he made a football move, and since he was not touched, he was not down by contact.

**A.R. 8.12 INCOMPLETE PASS—HOPS ON SAME FOOT**

Second-and-5 on A40. A pass is thrown to the sideline where A2 controls the ball with one foot inbounds and hops on the same foot inbounds prior to landing out of bounds.

**Ruling:** Third-and-5 on A40. Both feet did not touch inbounds.

**A.R. 8.13 INCOMPLETE PASS—SECOND STEP ON PLAYER**

First-and-10 on B25. A2 jumps up to catch a pass at the B10 and comes down near the sideline. A2's left foot lands on the ground, and his right foot comes down on B2 who is laying on the ground. A2's next step is out of bounds.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on B25. Incomplete pass.

**A.R. 8.14 INCOMPLETE PASS—ROLLS OVER ON PLAYER—LANDS OUT OF BOUNDS**

First-and-10 on B25. A2 jumps up to catch a pass in the back of the end zone. He controls the ball in the air and comes down with only one foot on the ground in the end zone as B2 tackles him. A2 lands on top of B2 in the end zone, and in the process of being tackled, A2 rolls over on top of B2 and his arm then touches the end line.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on B25. Incomplete pass.

**A.R. 8.15 INCOMPLETE PASS—PLAYER JUMPS FROM OUT OF BOUNDS**

Second-and-10 on A40. In an effort to intercept a pass at the B45, B2, who is standing with one foot on the sideline and the other inbounds, jumps up in the air and gains control of the ball. B2 then comes down to the ground with both feet inbounds and carries the ball out of bounds at the B45.

**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on A40. Incomplete pass, as B2 is considered out of bounds when he touches the ball the first time. The play is dead when B2 first touches the pass.

**A.R. 8.16 PROCESS OF THE CATCH—BALL TOUCHED BY OUT OF BOUNDS PLAYER**

First-and-10 on B47. A4 attempts to control a pass near the sideline at the B23 while airborne. B3 jumps from out of bounds and touches the ball in A4's hands before A4 gets his second foot to the ground. After A4 comes to the ground, he runs for a touchdown. (a) The ball was still loose when B3 touched it; or (b) the ball was held securely in A4's hands when B3 touched it.

**Rulings:**

(a) Second-and-10 on B47. Incomplete pass, because the ball was not in player control when it touched something that was out of bounds.

(b) Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. The touching by B3 does not put the ball out of bounds because it was in player control.

**Note:** The result is the same if this occurs in the end zone.

**A.R. 8.17 PASS COMPLETE—BALL TOUCHES PYLON**

Second-and-10 on B12. A4 controls a pass near the sideline at the B2-yard line with his left foot on the ground in bounds. As he is striding to take his second step, he reaches the ball out in his right hand, and it hits the pylon. His right foot then hits the ground in bounds, and then the rest of his body lands in bounds in the end zone, where he

maintains control of the ball.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. The ball touching the pylon does not put the ball out of bounds because it was in player control.

**A.R. 8.18 PASS COMPLETE—FOOT TOUCHES PYLON**

Second-and-10 on B30. A1 throws a forward pass high to A2 near the sideline. A2 controls the ball in the air and gets one foot down inbounds. His second foot touches the pylon and then touches down in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35 (3-20).

**A.R. 8.19 CONTACT BEFORE/AFTER QUARTERBACK BEGINS THROWING MOTION—PASS GOES BACKWARD**

Third-and-9 at the B39. Quarterback A1 sets up to pass at the B46. He is hit by B1: (a) before beginning his throwing motion; or (b) after beginning his throwing motion. This causes A1's body to turn, and the pass goes backward, where it is recovered by B2 at the B49.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B49. If a Team B player contacts the passer or the ball before his throwing motion of a forward pass begins, the passer is responsible for the direction of the pass if he passes the ball.

(b) A's ball, fourth-and-9 on B39, incomplete pass. If the contact happens after his throwing motion begins, it is a forward pass if he passes the ball, regardless of the ball's direction.

**A.R. 8.20 QUARTERBACK "TUCK"—PASS/FUMBLE**

Second-and-10 on A30. After quarterback A1's hand has started forward in a passing motion, he sees his intended receiver is covered and attempts to bring the ball back to his body. The ball is knocked loose by B1 and recovered by B2 at the A25. The ball came loose: (a) before he started to tuck it back to his body; (b) as he was bringing it back to his body; or (c) was secured against A1's body.

**Rulings:**

(a) Third-and-10 on A30. Incomplete pass.

(b) and (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on A25. Fumble. A1 lost the ball after he began to tuck it back to his body (3-21-4-Item 2).

**A.R. 8.21 QUARTERBACK RE-COCKS ARM—FUMBLE**

Second-and-10 on A30. After quarterback A1's hand has started forward in a passing motion, he changes his mind and does not pass the ball. The ball is knocked out of A1's hand by B1 and recovered by B2 at the A25 where he is touched down. A1 had brought the ball all the way down to his waist and then started to bring it back up to throw when it was knocked loose.

**Rulings:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A25. If the ball is knocked loose as the passer is attempting to "re-cock" his arm it is a fumble. If he brings his arm all the way back up, the passing motion begins again once he starts to bring his hand forward with control and ends when he begins to tuck it back to his body (3-21-4-Item 2, 3).

**A.R. 8.22 INCOMPLETE PASS—AIRBORNE RECEIVER FORCED OUT OF BOUNDS**

Second-and-10 on B45. A1 throws a pass to A2 near the sideline. A2 goes high to catch the pass, secures possession while in the air, but is then pushed by B1 causing one of A2's feet to come down on the sideline. B1 does not play the ball but instead pushes A2 with both hands on his waist. Had he not been pushed, A2 would have come down inbounds with both feet at the B30.

**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on B45. Incomplete pass.

**A.R. 8.23 COMPLETE PASS—RECEIVER CARRIED OUT OF BOUNDS**

Second-and-10 on B45. A1 throws a pass to A2 near the sideline. A2 goes high to catch the pass, secures possession while in the air, and would have come down with both feet inbounds at the B30; however, B1 wraps him up while he is still in the air and carries A2 toward the sideline where he finally comes down out of bounds: (a) at the B28; or (b) at the B32.

**Rulings:**

(a) First-and-10 on B28 (or where the ball crossed the sideline).

(b) First-and-10 on B30. When a receiver is carried out of bounds, rather than pushed out, the pass is complete, and the receiver gets his forward progress.

**A.R. 8.24 NO FUMBLE RECOVERY—RECOVERING PLAYER FORCED OUT**

First-and-10 on A25. A1 runs to the A30 where he fumbles the ball near the sideline. B1 secures control of the ball, but before his second foot touches the ground, A2 pushes him out of bounds at the A31. B1 never bobbles or loses control of the ball.

**Ruling:** Second-and-5 on A30. Fumble forward out of bounds. The criteria for possession of a pass, or the recovery of a backward pass or fumble, are the same.

**A.R. 8.25 SIMULTANEOUS CATCH—BALL REMAINS ALIVE**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 and B3 simultaneously control a pass in the air at the A40. As they land, both players land on their feet and wrestle for the ball. Eventually, B3 takes the ball away from A2 and is tackled at the A38.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A38. Until one of the players in simultaneous possession of the ball goes to the ground or out of bounds, the ball remains alive.

**A.R. 8.26 SIMULTANEOUS CATCH—BALL BELONGS TO OFFENSE**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 and B3 simultaneously control a pass in the air at the A40. As they land, one or both players fall to the ground with both players still in control of the ball.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A40. If there is a simultaneous catch, the ball is awarded to the offense once one or both players are on the ground, assuming neither of them lands out of bounds.

**A.R. 8.27 NOT A SIMULTANEOUS CATCH—PLAYER LANDS OUT OF BOUNDS**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 and B3 simultaneously control a pass in the air at the A40. As they land, (a) A2 maintains control of the ball and lands inbounds, but B3 lands with one foot out of bounds, or (b) both players land with one foot out of bounds.

**Rulings:**

(a) A's ball, first-and-10 on A40. A2 maintains control of the ball and lands inbounds, so B3's touching of the ball while out of bounds does not make the pass incomplete. Because A2 completed the process of the catch inbounds and B3 did not, this is a catch by A2. This is not a simultaneous catch.

(b) A's ball, second-and-10 on A20. Incomplete pass. Neither player completed the process of the catch inbounds.

**A.R. 8.28 NOT A SIMULTANEOUS CATCH—CONTROL NOT SIMULTANEOUS**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 controls a pass in the air at the A40. B3 then also gets control of the ball before they land. A2 and B3 fall down to the ground with both players controlling the ball.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A40. Not a simultaneous catch as A2 first gained and retained control of the ball once both players hit the ground.

**ILLEGAL PASSES**

**A.R. 8.29 PASS BEYOND LINE OF SCRIMMAGE**

First-and-10 on A30. Quarterback A1 scrambles to the A32 and throws a forward pass to end A2, who is tackled and downed on the 50.

**Ruling:** Second-and-13 on A27. A forward pass from beyond the line of scrimmage is a five-yard penalty from the spot of the pass and loss of down.

**A.R. 8.30 PASS BEYOND LINE OF SCRIMMAGE - DEFENSE CONTACTS RECEIVER EARLY**

First-and-10 on A30. Quarterback A1 scrambles to the A32 and throws a forward pass to end A2. B1 interferes with A2, but A2 catches the ball and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Second-and-13 on A27. Illegal forward pass. No pass interference can occur on an illegal forward pass, unless it is a second forward pass from behind the line, or a pass thrown after the ball has crossed the line and comes back behind the line.

**A.R. 8.31 ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS—SECOND FORWARD PASS FROM A'S END ZONE**

Second-and-12 on A10. Quarterback A1 has his pass batted back into his hands in the end zone. A1 then shovels the ball forward to back A2 who is tackled at the A9.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick A20. If the spot of an illegal forward pass is in Team A's end zone it will be a safety. Team B also has the option of accepting the foul from the previous spot with a loss of down, third-and-17 on A5.

**A.R. 8.32 ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS—BATTED BY TEAM B PLAYER**

Third-and-5 on B11. Quarterback A1 hands off to back A2 who runs to the B5 where he attempts to lateral the ball to A3, but the ball goes forward to the B4-yard line where B2 bats the ball in the air into the end zone. B3 then falls on the ball.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-4 on B10. An illegal forward pass by A2 is incomplete when it hits the ground. Five yards and loss of down from the spot of the pass. A forward pass, legal or illegal, may be batted in any direction by any eligible player.

**A.R. 8.33 PUNT TOUCHED BEYOND LINE BY B—RECOVERED BY A BEHIND LINE —FORWARD PASS**

Fourth-and-5 on A30. The punt is partially blocked by B1 and rolls to the A32 where B2 tries to pick it up, but B2 muffs it, and it rolls back to the A27. A1 picks up the ball there, sees end A3 at the A40, and throws him the ball. A3 catches the ball at the A40 and runs to the B25 where he is tackled.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A22. A's pass was illegal, but when Team A recovered the ball after Team B touched it beyond the line, a new series of downs started for Team A. It keeps the ball after enforcement. If Team A recovers the ball beyond the line after it is touched by Team B beyond the line, the ball would be dead.

**A.R. 8.34 ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS—COMPLETE—FUMBLED**

Fourth-and-5 on A30. The punt is partially blocked by B1. The ball rolls to the A32 where B2 tries to pick it up, but it gets away and rolls back to the A27. A1 picks up the ball there and throws to A3 at the A40. A3 catches the ball at the A40 and runs to the B25 where he is stripped of the ball by B3, who recovers there.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on the B25. Illegal forward pass, but the play continues after it was caught by A3, and Team B would decline the foul for the illegal forward pass and keep the ball.

**A.R. 8.35 ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS—NOT FROM SCRIMMAGE—NO DPI**

Fourth-and-5 on A30. The punt is partially blocked by B1. The ball rolls to the A32 where B2 tries to pick it up, but it gets away and rolls back to the A27. A1 picks up the ball there, sees end A2 at the A40, and throws him the ball. B1 interferes with A2 as he is reaching for the forward pass. B1 intercepts and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team B. Kickoff B35. No foul by B1, as the pass was “not from scrimmage,” since the LOS went away when B2 touched the kick beyond the line. Team B will decline the foul for A1’s illegal forward pass for throwing a forward pass after a change of possession.

**Note:** *Had the ball not been touched by Team B beyond the line, and simply rolled back behind it on its own, in addition to an illegal forward pass by A1, this would also be defensive pass interference by B1, because the line of scrimmage would still exist. The fouls would offset, and the down would be replayed.*

**A.R. 8.36 ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS FROM BEHIND THE LINE—DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE**

Third-and-10 on A30. During a forward pass that was thrown after A1 had crossed the line and then returned behind it, B1 interferes with receiver A2 at the A45. The pass is complete to A2 who is tackled at the 50.

**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on A30. Illegal forward pass and defensive pass interference fouls offset. Pass interference, roughing the passer, and intentional grounding rules apply on legal or illegal passes thrown from behind the line of scrimmage. They do not apply on illegal passes thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage or when there is no line of scrimmage.

**A.R. 8.37 FORWARD PASS—CAUGHT BY INELIGIBLE IN TEAM A’S END ZONE**

First-and-10 on A5. A1 drops back into his end zone and sets up a screen pass. A1 throws the ball to eligible A2, but ineligible A5 catches it in the end zone and is tackled there.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick A20. Foul for illegal touching of a pass. The play results in a safety so the foul would be declined. If this were the last play of either half, Team B could request a safety kick from the A20 as the foul also resulted in a safety.

**A.R. 8.38 FORWARD PASS—CAUGHT BY INELIGIBLE IN TEAM A’S END ZONE—ADVANCE**

First-and-10 on A6. A1 drops back into his end zone and throws a screen pass to eligible receiver A2, but ineligible A5 catches it in the end zone and is tackled at (a) the A2; or (b) the A16.

**Rulings:**

(a) and (b) Safety. Safety kick A20. Illegal touching of a pass in the receiver’s own end zone, but the play is not dead when the pass is caught.

**A.R. 8.39 ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS AFTER INTERCEPTION IN TEAM B’S END ZONE**

Second-and-10 on B15. On the last play of the first half, A1 throws a forward pass which B1 intercepts in the end zone and runs out to the B3. As he is being tackled, B1 throws a backward pass to B2. After catching the pass, B2, while running in the end zone, attempts a backward pass to B3 that goes forward and hits the ground.

**Ruling:** Safety. Since the safety was the result of a foul, Team A has the option to extend the period for a safety kick from the B20.

**LEGAL/ILLEGAL TOUCHING**

**A.R. 8.40 ELIGIBLE RECEIVER—ILLEGALLY CHUCKED OUT OF BOUNDS—PASS INTERFERENCE**

Third-and-5 on B40. End A2 is illegally chuckled out of bounds at the B30, immediately returns inbounds, and is interfered with by B2 at the B25, while the pass is in the air. B2 intercepts the ball and is tackled at the B40.

**Ruling:** A’s ball, first-and-10 on B25. Since A2 was illegally contacted out of bounds, he is an eligible receiver as soon as he reestablishes, and this is defensive pass interference. Decline the illegal contact penalty. A2 must make an immediate attempt to return inbounds in order to be eligible.

**A.R. 8.41 ILLEGALLY CHUCKED OUT OF BOUNDS—REESTABLISHES—FIRST TO TOUCH**

Third-and-5 on B40. End A2 is illegally chuckled out of bounds at the B30, immediately reestablishes inbounds, catches a pass at the B25, and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. An eligible receiver forced out of bounds illegally can be the first to touch a pass, provided he makes an immediate attempt to return inbounds and is inbounds when he first touches the pass. Decline the illegal contact penalty.

**A.R. 8.42 RECEIVER LEGALLY CHUCKED OUT OF BOUNDS—NO PASS INTERFERENCE**

Second-and-10 on A30. A3 is pushed out of bounds at the A34, and the pass is then thrown to him. He re-enters, gets both feet down, and reaches for the pass. B4 pushes A3 away from the ball and intercepts it. B4 runs it back to the A20 where he is downed.

**Ruling:** B’s ball, first-and-10 on A20. There can be no pass interference on A3, as he is an ineligible receiver.

**A.R. 8.43 RECEIVER OUT OF BOUNDS—FIRST TO TOUCH PASS**

Second-and-10 on A30. A3 is pushed out of bounds at the A34. He jumps from out of bounds and touches the pass before he gets both feet down. A3 catches the pass and runs to the A40 where he is downed.

**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on A30. A3 is out of bounds because he did not reestablish before touching the ball. The pass is incomplete as soon as A3 touches it.

**A.R. 8.44 RECEIVER OUT OF BOUNDS—REESTABLISHES—LEGAL TOUCHING**

First-and-10 on B25. Wide receiver A2 muffs a forward pass up into the air near the sideline, then steps out of bounds, reestablishes inbounds, and then completes the catch at the B10 where he is tackled.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B10. Completed pass. Once the pass is touched legally, all players become eligible, even if they step out of bounds, as long as they reestablish before touching the pass.

**A.R. 8.45 RECEIVER OUT OF BOUNDS—ILLEGAL TOUCH—OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE**

Second-and-10 on A30. A3 is pushed out of bounds at the A34. He reestablishes and interferes with B4's opportunity to intercept the pass by pushing him away from the ball. A3 catches the pass and runs to the A40.

**Ruling:** Second-and-20 on A20. Decline the foul for illegal touching and enforce the foul for offensive pass interference; or third-and-10 on A30. Decline the foul for offensive pass interference and enforce the foul for illegal touching.

**A.R. 8.46 PASS TOUCHES INELIGIBLE RECEIVER—CAUGHT BY T-QUARTERBACK**

Second-and-10 on A30. T-Formation Quarterback A1 throws a forward pass that glances off the back of tackle A5's helmet and ricochets up into the air. A1 catches the ball and runs to the A45.

**Ruling:** Second-and-15 on A25. Although A5's unintentional touching of the pass is not a foul, an originally ineligible player, (A1), is not eligible to touch the pass until it has been touched by a defensive player or an eligible offensive player (8-1-5-d).

**A.R. 8.47 PASS TOUCHES INELIGIBLE RECEIVER BEHIND LINE**

Fourth-and-8 on B12. On a fake field goal attempt, holder A1 throws a screen pass that accidentally hits guard A6's helmet at the B14. Back A2 pushes B2 out of the way at the B14, catches the ball, and runs it into the end zone.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. There is no foul for the unintentional touching of a forward pass. There can be no offensive pass interference behind the line of scrimmage or after the ball is touched.

**A.R. 8.48 INELIGIBLE RECEIVER—FAILS TO REPORT—CATCHES PASS**

Third-and-1 on A18. Player number A74 comes into the game and lines up at tight end. He is late coming in and runs directly to his position at the end of the line, without reporting to the Referee. Quarterback A1 throws A74 a pass, and he catches the ball at the A25 and runs to the 50-yard line where he fumbles and B1 recovers at that spot.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Decline the penalties for illegal touching and illegal formation/substitution.

**A.R. 8.49 ILLEGAL TOUCH—ILLEGAL CONTACT**

Third-and-5 on 50. End A2 is illegally chucked out of bounds at the B40. He returns immediately inbounds, but after several steps, he voluntarily goes out of bounds at the B35. He reestablishes inbounds, catches a pass, and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Third-and-5 on 50. The illegal touch and illegal contact offset. The ball is alive until the end of the play.

**DEFENSIVE CHUCKS AND CUTS**

**A.R. 8.50 LEGAL CUT—RECEIVER IS NOT FLEXED**

Third-and-6 on 50. End A2 lines up one yard outside of his tackle. Quarterback A1 throws an incomplete pass to the B30. Prior to the pass, B1 blocked A2 below the waist at the line of scrimmage.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-6 on 50. No foul. A receiver who is not flexed (lined up within two yards of his tackle) may be blocked below the waist on or behind the line within the tight end box (see 8-4-5-a, 12-2-4-d).

**A.R. 8.51 LEGAL CUT—CONTACT BEHIND LINE WHILE BALL IS IN THE AIR**

Third-and-9 on B30. Quarterback A1 is in a shotgun formation, and back A2 flanks four yards outside the tackle. A1 throws a screen pass to receiver A2 at the B32. As A2 reaches up to catch the ball, B4 blocks him below the waist, and the pass is incomplete.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-9 on B30. No foul unless the action by B4 is considered unnecessary roughness.

*Note: Illegal cut rules only apply prior to a pass being thrown, pass interference rules apply only beyond the line, and a block below the waist is legal against a player who is attempting to catch a forward or backward pass. Consequently, there is no foul.*

**A.R. 8.52 ILLEGAL CUT—RECEIVER IS FLEXED**

Second-and-10 on B35. Flanker A2 lines up three yards outside his tight end. At the snap, B2 blocks A2 below the waist at the line of scrimmage. Quarterback A1 completes a pass to his tight end at the B32 where he is downed.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B17. Personal foul (illegal cut) by B2, as A2 is flexed (more than two yards outside his own tackle) (8-4-5). This is also an illegal block below the waist because it occurs outside the tight end box (12-2-4-d). The penalty is enforced from the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 8.53 LEGAL CHUCK—QB IS OUT OF THE POCKET AREA**

First-and-10 on B40. Quarterback A1 rolls out of the pocket to the right and throws a forward pass to end A2, who was chucked by B2 at the B30 after A1 had moved to a position directly behind the original position of the tight end, and before he threw the pass. The pass falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on B40. Illegal contact rules no longer apply once the ball leaves the pocket area (8-4-7).

**A.R. 8.54 LEGAL/ILLEGAL CONTACT—RECEIVER CONTACTED TWICE—CONTACTED IN BACK**

Second-and-10 on B40. As quarterback A1 drops back in the pocket, B1 chucks wideout A2 at the B39. A2 cuts to the outside and gets away from B1, but he is then chucked again (clearly a separate act) at the B35 by (a) B1, or; (a) B2, (c) or in the back by B2. A1 is then sacked at the B45.

**Rulings:**

(a) First-and-10 on B35. The second chuck by the same player, even within five yards of the LOS, is illegal.

(b) Third-and-15 on B45. The second chuck by a different player is legal (8-4-1).

(c) First-and-10 on B35. It is illegal to chuck a receiver in the back within five yards of the line of scrimmage.

**A.R. 8.55      LEGAL/ILLEGAL CONTACT—SNAP DOES/DOES NOT HIT GROUND**

Second-and-10 on B30. A1 receives the snap but bobbles it as he drops back (either shotgun or in a T-Formation). A1 regains possession of the ball, (a) after it hits the ground and bounces immediately back into his hands, or (b) without the ball hitting the ground. A1 never leaves the pocket area and throws a pass to A2 at the B10 which falls incomplete. B2 chucked A2 at the B22 prior to the pass.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Third-and-10 on B30. No foul for illegal contact since the ball touched the ground.
- (b) First-and-10 on B25. Illegal contact. Since the ball did not touch the ground, and the QB was still in the pocket, the defense is prohibited from chucking an eligible receiver beyond five yards.

**A.R. 8.56      LEGAL CHUCK—BALL LEAVES QB'S POSSESSION**

First-and-goal on B8. On the last play of the game, Team A is behind by four points. QBA1 takes the snap and pitches back to A2 (still in the original pocket area) who sets up to throw to end A3 who is in the end zone. After the pitch and prior to pass from A2, B1 chucks A3 deep in the end zone. The pass falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** Game over. No foul. B1 can legally chuck downfield prior to the pass once the ball leaves the possession of the player who receives the snap (8-4-7).

**A.R. 8.57      LEGAL/ILLEGAL CHUCK—PUNT/FIELD GOAL FORMATION**

Fourth-and-2 on B40. Team A lines up in (a) a punt formation; or (b) a field goal formation. A3 who is the widest receiver on the left side of the formation is chucked by B3 at the B33. A1 throws a pass which B2 intercepts and returns for a touchdown.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Touchdown Team B. Kickoff B35. Actions that constitute illegal contact in a standard scrimmage formation are permitted when a team presents a punt formation, though defensive holding is prohibited.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Illegal contact rules against eligible receivers remain in effect when Team A is in a field goal formation.

**PASS INTERFERENCE**

**A.R. 8.58      OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE—BLOCKING BEYOND THE LINE BEFORE THE PASS IS TOUCHED**

Second-and-10 on A30. Tight end A3 blocks the linebacker on the line of scrimmage, breaks contact, and then initiates new contact six yards downfield prior to the pass being thrown to wide receiver A4 at the A45.

**Ruling:** Second-and-20 on A20. Offensive pass interference. If an offensive player blocks a defensive player more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage before a pass is touched, it is a foul for offensive pass interference.

**A.R. 8.59      OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE—INELIGIBLE BLOCKING DOWNFIELD**

Third-and-4 on A30. A1 throws a shovel pass to A2 who catches it at the A29 and runs to the A40. Prior to the pass, center A5 goes downfield and blocks linebacker B1 at the A33.

**Ruling:** Third-and-14 on A20. Offensive pass interference. Decline the foul for ineligible downfield.

**A.R. 8.60      OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE—PLAYER INITIATES BLOCK WITHIN ONE YARD**

First-and-goal on B7. (a) Tight end, or (b) left tackle, A2 blocks B1 at the line of scrimmage and maintains his block without losing contact and drives B1 downfield to the goal line. The pass is thrown to A3 who cuts behind A2 at the goal line while A2 is still blocking in the end zone. A3 catches the ball for a touchdown.

**Rulings:**

- (a) First-and-goal on B17. Offensive pass interference.
- (b) Touchdown Team A, kickoff A35. This is legal, because A2 is an ineligible player who made contact within 1-yard of the line of scrimmage and maintained continuous contact from his initial contact.

**A.R. 8.61      OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE—PUSH OFF**

First-and-10 on A30. Wideout A3 extends his arms and pushes B5 (who is covering him) at the A33 to create space. He runs across the field and eventually catches a pass at the A37 on the other side of the field. He runs to the 50 where he is tackled inbounds.

**Ruling:** First-and-20 on A20. If an offensive player pushes off a defensive player to create space more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage before attempting to catch a pass, it is offensive pass interference.

**A.R. 8.62      DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE—ARM BAR**

First-and-10 on A30. A1 throws a forward pass to A2 at the 50. As both players are looking for the ball, B2 uses his left arm to hold down A2's left arm so he cannot lift it to catch the pass, which falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Defensive pass interference. It would be offensive pass interference if A2 was holding down B2's arm to prevent an interception.

**A.R. 8.63      DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE—CUT WITH BALL IN AIR**

Second-and-10 on A30. B1 cuts end A2 below the waist at the B40 as A2 is reaching for the ball. The pass falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B40. This is defensive pass interference because the ball is in the air to that receiver. This is not an illegal cut because the ball is in the air and is not an illegal block below the waist because the player is attempting to catch a forward or backward pass.



- A.R. 8.64 DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE—ALSO PERSONAL FOUL**  
Third-and-2 on A20. A1 throws a forward pass to end A3 at the A35. Just before the pass arrives and A3 touches the ball, (a) B1 pulls A3 down by the facemask; (b) B1 hits A2 in the helmet with his shoulder; or (c) B1 lowers his helmet and makes forcible contact to A2's body. The pass falls incomplete.  
**Ruling:** (a), (b), and (c): A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Since the pass interference was also a personal foul, both fouls are enforced.
- A.R. 8.65 NOT PASS INTERFERENCE—BALL TIPPED—DEFENDER PULLS RECEIVER'S MASK**  
Third-and-2 on A20. A1 throws a forward pass to A3 at the A35. B1 pulls A3 down by the facemask after the ball was tipped by either A2 or B2. The pass falls incomplete.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A35. This is not defensive pass interference, as the ball was tipped, but the facemask foul is enforced from the previous spot.
- A.R. 8.66 DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE—BALL SNAPPED INSIDE TEAM B TWO-YARD LINE**  
First-and-goal on B1½. Quarterback A1 throws a pass to A3 who is three yards deep in B's end zone. B1 commits pass interference in the end zone.  
**Ruling:** First-and-goal on B¾. Half the distance. When the ball is snapped from inside the B2-yard line, if there is defensive pass interference in the end zone, the penalty is enforced half the distance to the goal.
- A.R. 8.67 NOT PASS INTERFERENCE—BOTH PLAYING BALL—TANGLED FEET**  
First-and-10 on A30. A1 throws a forward pass to A2 at the 50. Both A2 and B2 are looking back at the ball when their feet become entangled causing one or both to fall down. The pass is incomplete.  
**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on A30. Since both players were playing the ball, there is no foul for pass interference. If one is playing the ball and the other is not, it is pass interference on the player who is not playing the ball.
- A.R. 8.68 NOT PASS INTERFERENCE—NEITHER PLAYING BALL—TANGLED FEET**  
First-and-10 on A30. A1 throws a forward pass to A2 at the 50. Neither A2 nor B2 are looking at the ball when their feet tangle. The pass is catchable.  
**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on A30. This is not a foul, as neither player is looking for, nor playing the ball (8-5-3-b).
- A.R. 8.69 NOT PASS INTERFERENCE—BOTH PLAYING BALL**  
First-and-10 on A30. A1 throws a forward pass to end A2 at the 50. Both A2 and B2 are looking back at the ball when they collide. They both had an equal opportunity to get to the ball. The pass falls incomplete.  
**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on A30. This is not a foul, as both players were playing the ball.
- A.R. 8.70 NOT PASS INTERFERENCE—NO TWIST OR TURN**  
First-and-10 on A30. A1 throws a forward pass to A2 at the 50. As A2 reaches for the ball, B2 puts his right hand on or around A2's back but does not twist or turn him. The pass falls incomplete.  
**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on A30. This is not a foul. Putting a hand on or around A2's back is only a foul if A2 is pulled, twisted, or knocked off balance by B2 prior to either player touching the ball.
- A.R. 8.71 NOT PASS INTERFERENCE—PASS UNCATCHABLE**  
Third-and-4 on 50. Eligible receiver A2 runs to the B40, and with the ball in the air, pushes off B2, before breaking to the sideline. The pass sails 10 yards over A2's head and lands in the stands.  
**Ruling:** Fourth-and-4 on 50. No penalty for pass interference, as the pass is uncatchable by the involved player. When determining whether a pass is catchable, the trajectory is taken into consideration. At the sideline, a pass must land outside the white to be considered uncatchable. If the pass is thrown with a low trajectory, it could still be catchable even if it lands outside the white.
- A.R. 8.72 NOT PASS INTERFERENCE—WIDEST MAN IN PUNT FORMATION**  
Fourth-and-10 on 50. Team A lines up in a punt formation, but instead of punting, A1 takes the snap and throws a pass to flyer A2 (the widest man in the formation on the left side). B1 chucks A2 at the B40 before the pass, and again at the B25 while the pass was in the air. The contact by B1 prevents A2 from catching the pass, which falls incomplete.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. There is no foul for illegal contact or defensive pass interference on the widest man, when Team A presents a punt formation.
- A.R. 8.73 PASS INTERFERENCE—PUNT FORMATION—PUNT BLOCKED**  
Fourth-and-10 on 50. Team A lines up in a punt formation with A3 lined up as a flyer (the widest man in the formation on the left side). A1's punt is blocked at the A40 and the ball bounces into A1's hands. A1 then immediately passes the ball to A3 at the B30. Just before the catchable pass reaches A3 at the B30, B1 pushes A3 out of the way and B1 intercepts the pass and is downed at the B40.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B30. Defensive pass interference rules are back in effect after the ball is punted, even for the player who was originally the widest man in the formation.
- A.R. 8.74 NOT PASS INTERFERENCE—PUNT FORMATION—BALL NEVER KICKED**  
Fourth-and-10 on 50. Team A is in punt formation with A3 as a flyer (the widest man in the formation on the left side). A1 muffs the snap and scrambles toward the sideline. Just before A1 gets to the sideline, he passes the ball to A3 at the B30. Before the catchable pass reaches A3 at the B30, B1 pushes A3 out of the way and B1 intercepts

the pass and is downed at the B40.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. The exception to defensive pass interference rules when Team A snaps the ball in a punt formation remains in effect until the ball is punted.

**A.R. 8.75 HOLDING—PUNT FORMATION**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. Team A lines up in a punt formation, but instead of punting, A1 takes the snap and throws a pass to flyer A2, (the widest man in the formation on the left side): (a) B1 holds A2 at the B40 before the pass; or (b) B1 holds A2 with the ball in the air clearly preventing his ability to catch the pass. A1's subsequent pass to A2 falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** (a) and (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Although there can be no defensive pass interference on the two widest players in punt formation, defensive holding is a foul despite the formation (8-5-3, 12-1-6).

**A.R. 8.76 NOT PASS INTERFERENCE—FACE GUARDING**

Fourth-and-4 on B40. A1 drops back to the B48 while looking for an open receiver. He throws a pass to A2 who has gotten behind B1 at the B20. B1 turns his back to the passer, and at the B21, waves both his hands in A2's face. Because B1's hands are in front of A2's face, A2 loses sight of the ball, and it falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Not pass interference. There must be contact to have pass interference.

**A.R. 8.77 NOT PASS INTERFERENCE—CONTACT AFTER TIPPED PASS**

Second-and-10 on A35. A1 throws a forward pass which is tipped by defensive tackle B5 at the line of scrimmage. After the pass is tipped, receiver A2 is interfered with at the 50 and the pass falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on A35. No foul. Pass interference restrictions end when a pass is touched. If the interference occurred before the pass was touched, it would be a foul (8-5-1).

**INELIGIBLE PLAYER DOWNFIELD**

**A.R. 8.78 INELIGIBLE PLAYER DOWNFIELD—OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE**

Second-and-5 on A30. Tackle A6 blocks B4 legally and drives him downfield to the A35 and then loses contact. A6 then moves laterally and: (a) blocks B2; or (b) does not block. The forward pass is then thrown incomplete to A2 at the 50.

**Rulings:**

(a) Second-and-15 on A20, or third-and-5 on A30. Offensive pass interference.

(b) Third-and-5 on A30. No foul for ineligible downfield. Because A6 is legal in blocking his man downfield, after losing contact, A6 may legally move laterally or back towards his own end line. However, it is offensive pass interference if, after losing contact with B4, A6 blocks anyone more than one yard beyond the line before the pass is touched.

**A.R. 8.79 INELIGIBLE PLAYER DOWNFIELD AFTER LOSING CONTACT WITH DEFENDER**

Second-and-13-B35. Tackle A6 immediately blocks B3 on the line of scrimmage and drives him downfield for 4 yards. A6 then loses contact with B3 and (a) retreats to the line of scrimmage or (b) moves laterally on the B39 yard line. A1 completes a pass to the B20.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) A first-and-10 at B20. If an ineligible player makes contact with a defender within one yard of his line of scrimmage and drives him downfield, when contact is lost, the ineligible can move laterally or retreat; it is illegal, though, if he moves further downfield after losing contact.

**A.R. 8.80 INELIGIBLE LINEMAN DOWNFIELD – MORE OR LESS THAN ONE YARD**

Second-and-five at A25. Tackle A6 initially retreats to block, then advances forward. QBA1 throws the ball to end A2 at the A30. A2 catches the ball and is tackled at the A35. During the pass, A6 is at: (a) the A26½ with his back foot at the A26; or (b) the A27½ with his back foot at the A27.

**Rulings:**

(a) First-and-10 at A35. No foul for Ineligible Downfield.

(b) Second-and-10 at A20. Five-yard penalty for Ineligible Downfield because the entire body of A6 was more than a yard beyond the line of scrimmage when the pass was thrown.

**FOULS ON PASS PLAYS AND ENFORCEMENT**

**A.R. 8.81 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—QB OUT OF THE POCKET—BALL DOES NOT GET BACK TO LOS**

Third-and-5 on 50. A1 scrambles out of the pocket and is about to be tackled on the A42 when he throws the ball directly down to the ground at the A44, or out of bounds at the A44 with no eligible receiver in the area.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-15 on A40. Intentional grounding, as the ball did not get back to the line of scrimmage.

**A.R. 8.82 NOT INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—BALL BACK TO LINE OF SCRIMMAGE**

Second-and-3 on A45. Quarterback A1 scrambles out of the pocket and is about to be tackled on the A30 when he throws a forward pass that lands at the A47 with no eligible receiver in the area.

**Ruling:** Third-and-3 on A45. Not intentional grounding, since the QB was out of the pocket and the ball made it back to the line of scrimmage. If the pass lands out of bounds beyond the line of scrimmage extended, it is not a foul for intentional grounding.

**A.R. 8.83 NOT INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—RECEIVER OUTSIDE THE NUMBERS**

First-and-10 on B40. QBA1 is about to be tackled in the pocket by B1 at the B48 when he throws the ball out of bounds at the B30. The ball sails over the head of eligible receiver A3, who is between the numbers and the sideline.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on B40. No intentional grounding. If A3 was inside the numbers, it would be intentional grounding.

**A.R. 8.84 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—QB SPIKES BALL IN FRONT OF HIM—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Second-and-8 on A42. Thirty seconds remain in the game, and Team A is behind in the score and out of timeouts. Quarterback A1 drops back looking for receivers and then, after delaying, throws the ball down directly in front of him at the A34 with no defenders near him.

**Ruling:** Third-and-18 on A32. Intentional grounding; 10-second runoff (if the defense elects). Start the game clock on the ready for play signal. The score is irrelevant. Even though the QB was not under pressure, he cannot throw the ball directly into the ground, unless he receives the snap in a T-Formation Quarterback position and immediately spikes it to stop the clock.

**A.R. 8.85 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—MUFFED SNAP—BALL DOES/DOES NOT HIT GROUND**

First-and-10 on B20. One minute and thirty-five seconds remain in the first half, and Team A is hurrying to score before halftime. T-Formation Quarterback A1 muffs the snap, and: (a) regains possession of the ball before it hits the ground; or (b) the ball hits the ground but bounces back into A1's hands. A1 then immediately spikes the ball to stop the clock.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-10 on B20. No foul since the ball did not hit the ground, and the QB spiked the ball as soon as he gained possession.
- (b) Second-and-20 on B30 and run 10 seconds off the clock if Team B chooses. This is intentional grounding. If Team A has timeouts remaining, it can use one in lieu of the 10-second runoff, but the yardage and loss of down will still be enforced.

**A.R. 8.86 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—SPIKE TO CONSUME TIME**

First-and-10 on B30. The game clock is stopped with six seconds left in the first half. QBA1 takes the snap and immediately spikes the ball into the ground to take one second off the clock so that a field goal attempt will run out the clock.

**Ruling:** Half over. Intentional grounding and a 10-second runoff. A QB can only spike the ball to stop a running game clock. An attempt to take time off the clock is intentional grounding.

**A.R. 8.87 NOT INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—NOT UNDER PRESSURE**

Third-and-3 on B40. Quarterback A1 drops straight back and, without any defenders near him, throws the ball downfield to an open area at the B35. The pass falls incomplete with no receivers in proximity.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-3 on B40. Not intentional grounding, as the quarterback is not under pressure.

**A.R. 8.88 NOT INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—QB TAKES STEP BACK BEFORE SPIKING BALL**

Second-and-10 on A1. T-Formation Quarterback A1 takes a quick step back into the end zone and immediately throws the ball down in front of him to stop the clock with 35 seconds remaining in the game. He is not under pressure.

**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on A1. Not intentional grounding. If the QB takes more than one quick step backward, it is a foul for intentional grounding.

**A.R. 8.89 NOT INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—BALL OUT OF POCKET**

Second-and-5 on A35. A1 hands the ball to A2 who runs outside the tackle and then pitches the ball back to A1 who is still in the pocket. A1, under severe pressure, then throws the ball out of bounds beyond the line of scrimmage with no receiver in the area.

**Ruling:** Third-and-5 on A35. Not intentional grounding as the ball has been out of the pocket before the pass.

**A.R. 8.90 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—ELIGIBILITY OF RECEIVER**

Third-and-8 on A42. Quarterback A1 drops back in the pocket, and while under severe pressure at the A30, throws the ball into an area in which A5 is the only Team A player. The pass falls incomplete. (a) A5 is left tackle number 77; (b) A5 is tight end number 81 who was covered by a wide receiver at the snap; or (c) A5 was wide receiver number 88 who stepped on the sideline while running his route.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Fourth-and-20 on the A30. Intentional grounding. No eligible receiver in the direction/area of the pass.
- (b) Fourth-and-8 on A42. Decline penalties for illegal formation and ineligible downfield. Not intentional grounding, as A1 threw to a player whom he reasonably thought was eligible.
- (c) Fourth-and-8 on A42. No foul unless A5 was first to touch the pass. Not intentional grounding as A1 threw to a player who was eligible at the snap.

**A.R. 8.91 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—UNNATURAL THROWING MOTION**

Second-and-10 on A45. Quarterback A1, still in the pocket, and under heavy pressure at the A34, in an effort to avoid a sack: (a) throws the ball behind his back toward the sideline; or (b) flips the ball with his non-throwing hand; or (c) throws the ball underhanded. The ball hits the ground on the A47. There is an eligible receiver five yards away from where the ball hits.

**Ruling:** (a) (b) and (c) Third-and-10 on A45. Not intentional grounding, as the pass was in the direction and vicinity of an eligible receiver.

**A.R. 8.92 FORWARD HANDING TO INELIGIBLE RECEIVER—"NO DAYLIGHT"**

Second-and-5 on A45. Quarterback A1, in an effort to avoid a sack, tries to hand the ball forward to lineman A67 at the A35. The ball touches A67, but knowing he is ineligible, A67 lets the ball drop to the ground. The ball is knocked around and recovered and downed at the A41: (a) by A2; or (b) by B2.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Third-and-10 on A40. Illegal forward handing. No player may hand the ball forward except to an eligible receiver who is behind the line of scrimmage.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on A41. Illegal forward handing would be declined.

***Note:** If the ball makes contact with the ineligible player while still in possession of the player handing the ball, (referred to as "no daylight"), it is a fumble if the ball goes to the ground. If the ball is not in possession of the player attempting to hand it off at the time it contacts the ineligible player, and the ball goes to the ground, it is a forward or backward pass.*

**A.R. 8.93 PERSONAL FOUL TEAM B PRIOR TO CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Second-and-5 on 50. B5 head slaps A3 on the line of scrimmage prior to the pass. A1 completes a pass to A2 at the B40, where A2 fumbles. B4 recovers at the B35.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Enforce from the previous spot, as the passing team subsequently lost possession after the completion. Had the head slap occurred while A2 was running with the ball, or during the fumble, the penalty yardage would be added to the spot of the fumble, A first-and-10 on B25.

**A.R. 8.94 PERSONAL FOUL TEAM A PRIOR TO CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Second-and-5 on 50. A3 chop blocks prior to the pass. B3 intercepts a forward pass at the B40, runs, and is downed at the A30.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A15. When the personal foul is prior to an interception, or the recovery by the defense of a fumble or backward pass, or failure to make the line to gain on fourth down, the enforcement is 15 yards from the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 8.95 LEGAL/ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS AND PERSONAL FOUL PRIOR TO CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Second-and-10 on A40. Quarterback A1 scrambles to the A41 where (a) he throws a forward pass; or (b) he returns to the A39 where he throws a forward pass. The pass is intercepted by B1, who is downed at the 50. A2 pulled and twisted B3's facemask at the line of scrimmage at the snap.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b): B's ball, first-and-10 on A35. The personal foul can be enforced from the dead ball spot following the change of possession. Decline the illegal forward pass penalty.

**A.R. 8.96 PERSONAL FOUL TEAM A PRIOR TO CHANGE OF POSSESSION—FUMBLE IN END ZONE**

Second-and-10 on B25. Before the pass, A2 chop blocks at the B27. The pass is intercepted in the end zone by B1. As B1 runs with the ball: (a) he is tackled in the end zone; or (b) he fumbles, and the fumble is recovered and downed in the end zone by A2.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. As the play resulted in a touchback, the foul is enforced from the 20-yard line.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B15. The enforcement is from the goal line (deemed the spot of the interception), and the ball is returned to Team B.

**A.R. 8.97 PERSONAL FOUL TEAM A PRIOR TO DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

First-and-10 on A20. A1 throws a pass that is intercepted by B3 at the A40. Tackle A6 chop blocks prior to the interception. B3 returns the interception to the A17 and fumbles, and the ball is recovered by A2 at the A15.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A25. When there is a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul by Team A prior to an interception or the recovery of a fumble or backward pass, and Team B subsequently loses possession, the ball is returned to Team B, and the penalty is enforced from the spot of their interception/recovery.

**A.R. 8.98 PERSONAL FOUL BY TEAM A PRIOR TO TOUCHBACK**

Second-and-goal on B5. At the snap, center A2 pulls B2 to the ground by his facemask. A1 runs around right end and fumbles at the B3. The ball rolls into the pylon.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. The result of the play is a Touchback, and the personal foul can be enforced from the succeeding spot.

**A.R. 8.99 PERSONAL FOUL BY TEAM A DURING FUMBLE—FOLLOWED BY CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Second-and-10 on B45. A2 is running at the B40 when he fumbles. During the fumble, A2 grabs and twists B2 by the facemask. B3 then recovers the fumble and runs out of bounds on the A45.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A30. The personal foul by Team A prior to B's recovery of the fumble is enforced from the dead ball spot.

**BACKWARD PASS AND FUMBLE**

**A.R. 8.100 BACKWARD PASS—SNAP FROM CENTER**

Third-and-6 on A30. With one-minute remaining in the first half, the snap goes off QBA1's hands and is recovered by A2 at the A18 who runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. Any legal snap from center is a backward pass.

**A.R. 8.101 BACKWARD PASS—BALL MUFFED FORWARD AND OUT OF BOUNDS**

Fourth-and-5 on B20. With 1:52 left in the game, A1 throws a backward pass from the B25 to back A2 who muffs the ball forward where it rolls out of bounds at the B14 (1:45).

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B25. Backward pass out of bounds that conserves time. This penalty is a loss of down, so it is Team B's ball after enforcement. There is no 10 second runoff when enforcement of a penalty results in a change of possession.

**A.R. 8.102 BACKWARD PASS ON FOURTH DOWN—RECOVERED BEYOND LINE BY TEAM A**

Fourth-and-goal on B5. Team A trails 17-13 on the last play of the game. QBA1 takes the snap and tosses a backward pass to back A3 who muffs the pass at the B10. The ball is muffed by several players until it rolls into the end zone and A5 recovers.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Legal recovery by A5 because the status of the ball is a backward pass, not a fumble. Team A wins 19-17. The Try is not attempted.

**A.R. 8.103 BACKWARD PASS—BATTED IN FLIGHT BY DEFENSE**

First-and-10 on 50. Quarterback A1 pitches the ball backward, and it is batted (in flight) on the A45 by B6 to the A40 where B5 recovers the ball and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team B. Kickoff B35. A pass in flight (forward or backward) may be batted in any direction by any defensive player.

**A.R. 8.104 MUFFED SNAP ON TRY KICK**

During a Try from the B15, holder A2 muffs the snap. A3 picks up the ball and completes a pass from the B18 to end A4 in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Try good. Award two points. Kickoff A35.

**A.R. 8.105 MUFFED BACKWARD PASS—LEGAL PUSH IN BACK TO RECOVER**

Second-and-4 on B40. A2 passes backward to A3 at the B44, who muffs the ball. B1 attempts to recover the ball, but A3 pushes him in the back, recovers the ball at the B42, and runs to the B30.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B30. Legal action by A3, as the push in the back occurred during a personal attempt to recover a loose ball.

**A.R. 8.106 BACKWARD PASS—DEFENSIVE HOLDING WHILE PASS IS IN THE AIR**

Second-and-15 on A3. A1 flips a backward pass to A2 who is in the end zone. Before A2 can catch the ball, B2 tackles him, and the ball goes out of bounds in the end zone.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A8. The foul (holding) by B2 is enforced from the previous spot. If B2 had been making a personal attempt to recover the ball, the action would only be legal had the ball already hit the ground.

**FUMBLES**

**A.R. 8.107 FUMBLE FORWARD—TOUCHED BY OUT OF BOUNDS PLAYER**

Third-and-8 on B34. A2 fumbles near the sideline at the B28. B2, who was out of bounds, steps inbounds and recovers the fumble at the B25 with one foot touching the sideline.

**Ruling:** A's ball, fourth-and-2 on B28. For a legal recovery, the player must have reestablished with both feet (or body part other than hands) inbounds prior to the recovery. Fumble forward out of bounds. The game clock should be restarted by the Referee as the ball is being brought back into the field, before it is actually spotted at the hash mark. If time is an issue, the Referee should tell the QB that the clock will be starting.

**A.R. 8.108 FUMBLE FORWARD—OUT OF BOUNDS**

Third-and-6 on A40. Back A2 runs to the 50 and fumbles the ball to the B48 where B3 and A3 recover the ball simultaneously. B3's right foot is touching the sideline when the ball is recovered.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. A simultaneous recovery would belong to the fumbling team, but since B3 is out of bounds and touching a loose ball, this is a fumble forward out of bounds and not a simultaneous recovery. The Referee starts the clock as the ball is being brought back into the field of play, and he should attempt to tell the quarterback.

**A.R. 8.109 FUMBLE—FOURTH-DOWN FUMBLE RULE**

Fourth-and-7 on B17. A1 runs to the B16 and fumbles. The ball rolls back to the B21 where A2 picks it up and throws a completed pass to end A3 in the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B21. Fourth-down fumble. The play should be blown dead immediately when ball is recovered by A2.

**A.R. 8.110 TEAM B FUMBLE—FOURTH-DOWN FUMBLE RULE**

Fourth-and-2 on B20. Before the two-minute warning, A1 fumbles on the B18. B1 picks up the ball there and runs to the B20 where he fumbles. B2 recovers and runs to the B30.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. The fourth-down fumble rule only applies to Team A, and only before a change of possession. (The two-minute fumble rule applies to everyone.)

**A.R. 8.111 FUMBLE—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

First-and-10 on 50. On the last play of the game with the score tied, end A2 catches a forward pass at the B10 and runs to the B1-yard line, is tackled, but before he is down the ball pops out of A2's hands into the air. A3 catches the

ball in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Go to overtime. Only A2 can recover and advance the ball.

**A.R. 8.112 FUMBLE/MUFFED HANDOFF—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

First-and-10 on A20. After the two-minute warning, A1 attempts to hand the ball to A2 at the A18. A2 does not get the ball cleanly and bobbles the ball until he gets to the A21, at which point: (a) he gains full control of the ball without it ever hitting the ground; or (b) before getting control of the ball, it hits the ground once at the A21 and bounces right back up into A2's hands and he gains complete control. A2 runs to the 50 where he is run out of bounds.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. This is transferring player possession and not a fumble if either player immediately regains control of the ball before it hits the ground, so A2 can advance once he gains control.
- (b) A's ball, second-and-12 on A18. Since neither player immediately regained control before the ball hit the ground, this is considered a fumble by A1 on the exchange, and therefore the ball returns to the A18, which is the spot of the fumble by the fumbling player (A1).

**A.R. 8.113 FUMBLE BY TEAM B AFTER INTERCEPTION—BEFORE/AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Second-and-7 on B15. B1 intercepts a pass in the end zone, runs, and fumbles the ball in the end zone. The ball rolls out to the B3 where B2 recovers: (a) prior to the two-minute warning; or (b) after the two-minute warning.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. Before the two-minute warning, only Team A is restricted from advancing a fourth-down fumble, and there are no restrictions for Team B.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Two-minute fumble rules apply to both teams, throughout the down.

**FOUL DURING FUMBLE**

**A.R. 8.114 TEAM B FOUL DURING FUMBLE BEYOND LINE**

Second-and-12 on A40. A2 runs to the B45, fumbles, and B5 recovers. B3 committed a personal foul at the 50 during the fumble.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B30. When a foul occurs during a fumble, the basic spot of enforcement is the spot of the fumble.

**A.R. 8.115 TEAM B FOUL DURING FUMBLE BEHIND LINE**

Second-and-12 on A40. A2 fumbles at the A35. B6 holds A2 to allow B5 to recover the fumble at the A35.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A45. When the fumble is behind the line of scrimmage, the enforcement spot for a foul during a fumble is the previous spot.

**A.R. 8.116 TEAM A FOUL DURING FUMBLE**

Third-and-6 on A44. A2 runs to the B45 where he fumbles. A3 recovers the ball on the B40. During the fumble, A4 holds on the 50.

**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on A40. Foul by Team A during the fumble. Since the foul occurred behind the spot of the fumble, the penalty is enforced from the spot of the foul.

**A.R. 8.117 TEAM B PERSONAL FOUL DURING FUMBLE—ADVANCED BY TEAM A**

Second-and-8 on B40. A2 fumbles the ball at the B35, and during the fumble, B1 grabs and twists A3's facemask. A4 recovers the fumble and runs to the B12 where he is tackled.

**Ruling:** First-and-goal on B6. Team B's personal foul can be enforced from the dead ball spot because Team A had possession at the end of the down; see 14-2-4. If A4 recovered the fumble and was downed behind the spot of the fumble, the personal foul could still be enforced from the spot of the fumble.

**MISCELLANEOUS PLAYS**

**A.R. 8.118 MUFFED FORWARD HANDOFF HITS GROUND**

On the kickoff to start the second half, B1 catches the kick on the B4-yard line and runs to the B10 where he hands the ball forward to B2 who is in front of him. B2 muffs the handoff, the ball hits the ground on the B11, and (a) A1 falls on the ball there, or (b) B3 recovers the ball at the B13.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on B11. This is an illegal forward handoff resulting in a fumble, so Team A would decline the foul and keep the ball.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B5. Illegal forward handing is enforced from where the player was when he handed the ball forward.

**A.R. 8.119 MUFFED FORWARD HANDOFF BEYOND LINE**

Third-and-10 on B40. A1 scrambles, and when he is at the B39, attempts to hand the ball to A2 who is at the B38. A2 muffs the handoff, and the ball rolls to the B35 where B1 attempts to pick it up but accidentally kicks the ball, and it continues to roll to the B12 where B1 finally falls on it.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B12 (decline the forward handing foul), or A's ball, fourth-and-14 on B44.

**A.R. 8.120 BATTING OF FORWARD PASS BY TEAM A PLAYER TO TEAMMATE**

First-and-10 on A25. A1 throws a forward pass to A2 who, at the A40, bats the ball forward to eligible A3 at the A45, who catches the ball and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. Legal play. A forward pass in flight may be batted in any direction by any eligible player.

**A.R. 8.121 CONTROLLED BAT OF PASS BY TEAM A—FORWARD/BACKWARD**

Third-and-10 on A40. Receiver A2 jumps in the air and controls the forward pass while still airborne at the B30. Before coming to the ground, A2 throws the ball: (a) forward; or (b) backward, to A3 who catches the ball and scores.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Fourth-and-20 on A30. The illegal bat is enforced from the previous spot with a loss of down. This is also a foul if the pass is incomplete or intercepted. A forward pass that is controlled by a player and thrown forward (before the catch), is an illegal bat. While a forward pass in flight may be batted in any direction by any eligible player, forward bat is illegal.
- (b) Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. This is a legal bat toward Team A's end line.

**A.R. 8.122 BATTED PASS BY TEAM A CAUGHT BY INELIGIBLE**

First-and-10 on A25. A1 passes forward to A2 who, at the A30, bats the ball forward to tackle A6 who was legally downfield. A6 catches the ball and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. Legal play. The touch by A2 makes A6 eligible to catch the pass.

**A.R. 8.123 FORWARD HANDING BEHIND LINE—PASS TO SHOTGUN QB**

Second-and-10 on A20. Quarterback A1, in a shotgun formation, hands off forward to back A2, who runs right on a sweep, stops, and passes from the A18 to A1 at the A26 who catches the pass and is tackled at the A31.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A31. Since A1 was not a T-Formation Quarterback, he is an eligible receiver and the handoff forward to an eligible receiver behind the line is legal and not considered a forward pass.

**A.R. 8.124 NO GRASP-AND-CONTROL—PLAY REMAINS ALIVE**

Third-and-2 on A27. Quarterback A1 scrambles to the A24 and is grabbed by B1 below the waist. No other Team B players are in the vicinity. B1 attempts to tackle A1, but before he hits the ground A1 throws a pass to A3 who catches the ball on the A45 and scores.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. The quarterback's safety is not in jeopardy (12-2-11).

**A.R. 8.125 GRASP-AND-CONTROL—PLAY IS DEAD**

Second-and-5 on A25. Quarterback A1 is grabbed at the waist and controlled by B1 at the A20. B2 and B3 also are about to tackle A1. Prior to hitting the ground, A1 is able to throw the ball to A2 at the A48 who then scores.

**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on A20. The Referee should kill the play when the QB is in the grasp and there are other defenders bearing down on him. The quarterback's safety is in jeopardy (12-2-11).

**A.R. 8.126 INTERCEPTION—FORWARD PROGRESS**

Second-and-10 on B25. A1's pass is intercepted by B1 in B's end zone, and B1 is tackled from behind by A2. A2 drives B1 into the field of play (either while B1 is airborne or on his feet), causing B1 to fall to his knee on the B1 with the ball at the B2.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B2. Since A2 drove B1 forward, there is no forward progress, and the dead ball spot is where the ball is when B1 was down.

**A.R. 8.127 ACTION BY QUARTERBACK IMMEDIATELY AFTER SNAP—FAKE SPIKE/KNEEL DOWN**

Second-and-10 on B25. Quarterback A1 takes the snap and then immediately: (a) fakes spiking the ball into the ground; or (b) fakes taking a knee at the B26. A1 then throws a complete pass to A2 in the end zone.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Touchdown Team A. Legal play.
- (b) Third-and-11 on B26. The Referee should kill the play immediately when the QB fakes taking a knee.

**A.R. 8.128 QUARTERBACK MUFFS SNAP—ATTEMPTS TO SPIKE/SPIKES BALL**

Third-and-10 on B25. Quarterback A1, who wants to spike the ball to kill the clock, muffs the snap, and: (a) pushes the ball to the ground in an attempt to spike it, and B3 falls on the ball at the B30; (b) regains possession of the ball before it hits the ground, and immediately spikes the ball which glances off A2's foot and hits the ground; or (c) regains possession of the ball before it hits the ground, and immediately spikes the ball which glances off A2's foot and bounces up (without hitting the ground) and is intercepted by B3 at the B30 where he is tackled.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. This is a muffed backward pass and a legal recovery by Team B.
- (b) Fourth-and-10 on B25. Incomplete pass. There is no foul for intentional grounding or illegal touching.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. Interception since the ball never touched the ground. There is no foul for illegal touching (3-21).



## **RULE 9 SCRIMMAGE KICKS—DEFENSIVE FORMATION**

### **A.R. 9.1 DEFENSIVE ALIGNMENT OVER CENTER—PUNT**

Fourth-and-10 on A20. Team A lines up in a standard punt formation, with B1 on the line of scrimmage and directly over snapper A2. The ball is snapped to punter A1. (a) A1 muffs the snap, picks up the ball and runs to the A23 where he is downed; or (b) A1 shanks the punt out of bounds at the 50.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) Fourth-and-5 on A25. Illegal formation. The foul happens at the snap, due to the standard punt formation, and the ball does not need to be kicked (9-1-3, Item 1).

### **A.R. 9.2 DEFENSIVE ALIGNMENT OVER CENTER—FIELD GOAL OR TRY ATTEMPT**

Fourth-and 5 on B25. Team A lines up in a standard field goal formation with B1 in a two-point stance directly over snapper A2. Before the snap, he takes a step back so that he is more than a yard off the line of scrimmage, but his feet are still even with the back foot of B3, who is in a three-point stance on the line of scrimmage. The kick is good.

**Ruling:** Team A is awarded 3 points, KO A35. The defensive formation is legal, because the defender over the center is more than a yard off the line of scrimmage at the snap (9-1-3, Item 2).

### **A.R. 9.3 DEFENSIVE ALIGNMENT—FIELD GOAL**

Fourth-and-10 on B25. A1's field goal attempt from the B33 is wide right. At the snap Team B: (a) had seven men on the line of scrimmage to the left of the snapper, but only six rushed; or (b) had six men on the line of scrimmage to the left of the snapper. In both (a) and (b), Team A was lined up in a standard field goal formation.

**Rulings:**

(a) A's ball, fourth-and-5 on B20. Illegal formation. Team B cannot have more than six players on the line on either side of the snapper at the snap when Team A presents a standard field goal formation, regardless of how many players rush the kicker.

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B33. No foul.

### **A.R. 9.4 DEFENSIVE ALIGNMENT—MOTION OR SHIFT**

Fourth-and-5 on A25. Team A initially lines up in a standard punt formation and all 11 players come set. After setting up 7 yards deep, personal protector A2 steps 3 yards forward to call signals, and then returns to a position 7 yards deep before the ball is snapped. B1 is lined up on the line of scrimmage directly over center A3. Punter A1 shanks the punt out of bounds at the A45.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. On scrimmage kicks, motion or a shift by Team A removes the prohibition on Team B against covering the center. It is a shift if the personal protector moves both feet after all 11 offensive players have come set for a full second.

### **A.R. 9.5 DEFENSIVE ALIGNMENT—UNBALANCED FIELD GOAL FORMATION**

Fourth-and-5 on B25. Team A lines up in an unbalanced field goal formation with 2 tackles on the right side. B3 is originally lined up over guard A6, but just before the snap he slides over and covers up the snapper. The kick from the B33 is wide left.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B33. If Team A does not present a standard field goal formation (an equal number of players on either side of the snapper in a tight formation), it removes the restrictions on Team B relating to covering the center.

### **A.R. 9.6 DEFENSE PUSHING TEAMMATES—PUNT/FIELD GOAL/TRY FORMATION**

Fourth-and-10 on B32. (a) A1's field goal attempt from the B40 is missed; or (b) A1's punt goes out of bounds at the B15. At the snap, B1 and B2, who are both in two-point stances, push linemen B4 and B8 into the offensive formation.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B17. Unnecessary roughness. Team B players cannot push teammates into the offensive formation when Team A is lined up for a punt, field goal, or Try kick attempt. The enforcement is from the previous spot and an automatic first down. This is a foul because of the kick formation, and the ball does not have to be kicked.

### **A.R. 9.7 OFFENSIVE HOLDING—PUNT**

Fourth-and-5 on A45. At the snap, B2 rushes Punter A1 and is pulled down by personal protector A3: (a) just before the ball is kicked; or (b) just after the ball has been kicked and is beyond B2. The ball is fielded by B3 at the B9-yard line where he is immediately tackled.

**Rulings:**

(a) A's ball, fourth-and-15 on A35, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B19. Foul for offensive holding.

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B9. No foul for offensive holding because the ball has been kicked.

## **PUNT MUFFED BY TEAM B IN FIELD OF PLAY**

### **A.R. 9.8 BOUNCES IN END ZONE AND OUT OF BOUNDS IN FIELD OF PLAY**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt is muffed by B2 on the B5, where it bounces into the end zone and rebounds out to the B3-yard line, where it goes out of bounds.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B3.

### **A.R. 9.9 BOUNCES IN END ZONE AND REBOUNDS TO FIELD OF PLAY—RECOVERED BY TEAM B**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt is muffed by B2 on the B5, where it bounces into the end zone and rebounds back into the field of play, where B4 recovers on the B2.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B2.

- A.R. 9.10 BOUNCES IN END ZONE AND REBOUNDS TO FIELD OF PLAY—RECOVERED BY TEAM A**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt is muffed by B2 on the B5, where it bounces into the end zone and rebounds back into the field of play, where A4 recovers on the B2.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-goal on B2.
- A.R. 9.11 BOUNCES INTO END ZONE WHERE TEAM B RECOVERS**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt is muffed by B2 on the B5. It bounces into the end zone, where B2 recovers.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback.
- A.R. 9.12 BOUNCES INTO END ZONE WHERE TEAM A RECOVERS**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt is muffed by B2 on the B5. It bounces into the end zone, where A4 recovers.  
**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35.
- A.R. 9.13 BOUNCES INTO END ZONE AND TEAM B RUNS IT OUT**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt is muffed by B2 on the B5. It bounces into the end zone, where B2 recovers and runs it out to the B15.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B15.
- PUNT MUFFED IN FLIGHT BY TEAM B IN END ZONE**
- A.R. 9.14 REBOUNDS BACK INTO FIELD OF PLAY AND OUT OF BOUNDS**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt is muffed in flight by B2 in the end zone, and before touching anyone else, it rebounds back into the field of play and goes out of bounds at the B5.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B5.
- A.R. 9.15 REBOUNDS BACK INTO FIELD OF PLAY—TEAM B RECOVERS**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt is muffed in flight by B2 in the end zone, and before touching anyone, it rebounds back into the field of play, where B3 recovers on the B5.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B5.
- A.R. 9.16 REBOUNDS BACK INTO FIELD OF PLAY—TEAM A RECOVERS**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt is muffed in flight by B2 in the end zone, and before touching anyone, it rebounds back into the field of play, where A4 recovers on the B5.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-goal on B5.
- A.R. 9.17 TEAM B TOUCHES IN END ZONE—TEAM A RECOVERS**  
Fourth-and-10 on 50. B1 muffs the punt in flight in the end zone. A1 recovers in the end zone.  
**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35.
- PUNT HITS IN END ZONE AND REBOUNDS TO FIELD OF PLAY**
- A.R. 9.18 TEAM B FALLS ON BALL**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt hits in the end zone and rebounds to the B5 where B2 falls on it and is downed.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. The ball is dead when it hits in the end zone, untouched by Team B.
- A.R. 9.19 TEAM A RECOVERS**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt hits in the end zone and rebounds out to the B5, where A6 recovers.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. The ball is dead when it hits in the end zone, untouched by Team B.
- TEAM A TOUCHES PUNT IN END ZONE OR FIELD OF PLAY**
- A.R. 9.20 TEAM A BATS PUNT BACKWARD WHILE TOUCHING IN END ZONE**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. The airborne punt is batted back into the field of play from the end zone by A5, while he is contacting the ground in the end zone. B2 recovers at the B5 and runs to the B25.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback. The ball is dead when it is touched by the Team A player in the end zone, as it has not previously been touched by Team B.
- A.R. 9.21 TEAM A FIRST TOUCHES IN FIELD OF PLAY AND BALL GOES OUT OF BOUNDS**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. A4 touches the punt at the B5, and the ball then goes out of bounds at the B4.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B5, the spot of A's first touching.
- A.R. 9.22 TEAM A FIRST TOUCHES IN FIELD OF PLAY AND TEAM B RECOVERS**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. A4 touches the punt in the field of play at the B10, and B2 recovers the ball at the B4.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B10, the spot of A's first touching.
- A.R. 9.23 TEAM A BATS BALL INTO END ZONE**  
Fourth-and-5 on A45. The punt hits on the B5 and bounces up and over the goal line. A2 jumps from the B2, and while airborne over the end zone, he bats the ball backward. The ball hits in the end zone and then rolls into the field of play where B1 picks it up, runs to the B30, fumbles, and A3 recovers.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback. The ball is dead when it hits in the end zone, untouched by B.

**A.R. 9.24 TEAM A BATS BALL FROM END ZONE OUT OF BOUNDS INSIDE PYLON**

Fourth-and-5 on A45. The punt bounces from the field of play into the end zone but is still airborne and has not touched in the end zone. A1 leaps from the B1 and bats the ball back across the goal line. The batted ball crosses the goal line inside the pylon, crosses the sideline in flight at the B2, and first hits the ground out of bounds at the B3 (extended).

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B2 (the spot where the ball crossed over the sideline prior to hitting out of bounds). The spot of the first touching is the B1 (the spot where A1 left his feet prior to batting the ball).

**A.R. 9.25 TEAM A BATS BALL FROM END ZONE OUT OF BOUNDS OUTSIDE PYLON**

Fourth-and-5 on A45. The punt bounces from the field of play into the end zone but is still airborne and has not touched in the end zone. A1 leaps from the B1 and bats the ball back across the goal line (extended). The batted ball crosses the sideline in the end zone (and the goal line extended, outside the pylon), and first hits the ground out of bounds at the B2 (extended).

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback since the ball was outside the pylon before hitting out of bounds (11-6-1).

**FIRST/ILLEGAL TOUCHING**

**A.R. 9.26 FIRST TOUCH—LAST PLAY OF PERIOD**

Fourth-and-16 on A8. On the last play of the half, punter A1 gets off a poor punt, and A2 first touches the ball at the A30. B1 picks it up and runs to the A4 where he fumbles and A3 recovers in the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A30. B may choose to extend the period at the spot of the first touch by A2, whether B1 fumbled or not.

**A.R. 9.27 FIRST TOUCH—RECOVERY AND FUMBLE BY TEAM B**

Fourth-and-5 on A30. A1's punt bounces at the B48 and then is first touched by A2 at the B46. The ball rolls to the B40 where B1 picks it up and runs to the 50, fumbles, and A2 recovers.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B46, the spot of the first touch violation.

**A.R. 9.28 FIRST TOUCH—FOUL BY TEAM B DURING RETURN—FUMBLE**

Fourth-and-10 on A48. A2 is the first to touch A1's punt at the B14. The ball rolls to the B10, where B1 picks it up, runs to the 50, fumbles, and A3 recovers there. (a) During B1's run, B2 clipped on the B40, or (b) B2 held on the B35.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on B35. The personal foul by B2 can be carried over the fumble and enforced from the dead ball spot, (personal foul prior to an interception, or prior to the recovery of a fumble or backward pass). The enforcement of that foul eliminates the spot of first touching.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B14. When Team A declines the Team B holding foul, Team B can take the ball at the spot of the first touching. If Team A accepted the Team B holding penalty, it would be enforced from the B35, resulting in B's ball at the B25.

**A.R. 9.29 TEAM B FOUL—BATTING/KICKING BALL INTO OPPONENT—RECOVERY BY TEAM A**

Fourth-and-10 on B40. While the punt is in the air, B1 blocks A3 in the back or holds A3 at the B20. The punt lands at the B10 where, (a) A2 intentionally bats the ball backward into receiver B1, or (b) A2 kicks the ball into receiver B1. A3 then recovers at the B12.

**Ruling:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B6. Since A2 batted the ball into B1, B1 is deemed not to have touched the kick, so it is Team B's ball at the end of the down. The post possession foul for holding or blocking in the back would be enforced from where the kick ended at the B12.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B6, or fourth-and-10 on B40. This is a double foul with a change of possession. B1 is deemed not to have touched the ball, because it was kicked into him, so it is Team B's ball at the end of the down. The post possession foul for the holding or block in the back combines with the illegal kicking foul to create a double foul with a change of possession, which gives B the option of also replaying the down on a kick play.

**A.R. 9.30 ILLEGAL TOUCH—PLAYER FROM OUT OF BOUNDS**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. A1's punt is rolling, (a) at the B6, where A2 recovers and downs it; or (b) at the B4, where A2 recovers and downs it; or (c) at the B4, where it is recovered by A2 and carried into the end zone. A2 had been legally blocked out of bounds at the B40 but returned immediately inbounds.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Fourth-and-15 on A45, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B11. The illegal touching can be enforced from the previous spot or the dead ball spot.
- (b) Fourth-and-15 on A45, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. The illegal touching inside the five-yard line by a player who had been out of bounds gives Team B the additional option of a touchback.
- (c) Fourth-and-15 on A45, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B25. The result of the play is a touchback, so the five-yard penalty can be tacked on from the B20.

**A.R. 9.31 FIRST TOUCH—PLAYER FROM OUT OF BOUNDS**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. A1 punts the ball deep to B3 at the 10-yard line. B3 lets the ball go, and flyer A2 bats the ball at the B1 back to the B5. As the ball is rolling at the B5, A3 who had been legally blocked out of bounds, comes in

and reestablishes himself, and then falls on the ball at the B5.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B5. Team B takes the ball at the most advantageous spot of first touching. The touch by A3, while a first touch, is not a foul, because the ball has previously been touched by another player (A or B on scrimmage kick plays).

**A.R. 9.32 MULTIPLE ILLEGAL TOUCH SPOTS—PLAYER FROM OUT OF BOUNDS**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. Gunner A2 is legally blocked out of bounds as he covers the punt, but A2 reestablishes inbounds and is then the first to touch the rolling punt at the B16. The punt continues to roll toward the goal line untouched by anyone else, until A2 downs the ball on the B4.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20, or fourth-and-15 on A45. Multiple fouls by A2. Team B can take the ball at the spot of the first illegal touch (B16), enforce the five-yard penalty from the dead ball spot (also the spot of A2's second touching), enforce the five-yard penalty at the previous spot and replay the down, or take a touchback due to the touching inside the 5-yard line. There is no option to enforce the five-yard penalty from the first illegal touch spot (B16), because that was not the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 9.33 FIRST TOUCH—POSSESSION BY TEAM A—RELEASES BALL**

Fourth-and-8 on B48. The punted ball comes down at the B4-yard line, where A2 catches it and his momentum carries him into the end zone; however, he releases the ball at the B1-yard line, but the ball rolls into the end zone. No Team B player could have caught the ball.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B4. The play becomes dead as soon as A2 releases the ball in his possession. Because he releases it prior to touching in the end zone with possession, Team B will next snap at the spot A2 first touches the ball, which is also the dead ball spot in this case. It is irrelevant where the ball lands after he releases the ball.

**A.R. 9.34 FIRST TOUCH—NO POSSESSION BY TEAM A**

Fourth-and-8 on B48. A1 punts the ball high in the air. Teammate A2 controls the airborne punt at the B15, takes two steps, and then loses control of the ball before establishing possession. The ball goes out of bounds through the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. A punted ball is dead when the kickers catch or recover a kick beyond the line of scrimmage (9-3-2). If a kicking team player loses control before completing possession (3-2-7), the ball remains loose.

**A.R. 9.35 MULTIPLE FIRST TOUCH SPOTS—POSSESSION BY TEAM A—RELEASES BALL**

Fourth-and-8 on B48. The punted ball is bouncing at the B8-yard line, where A2 tries to recover it in full stride, but muffs it toward the goal line. He then possesses it at the B4-yard line and his momentum carries him into the end zone; however, he releases the ball at the B1-yard line, and the ball rolls into the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B8. The play becomes dead as soon as A2 releases the ball in his possession. Because he releases it prior to touching in the end zone with possession, the dead ball spot is where A2 first possesses it, the B4. Team B will take the ball at the spot A2 first touches the ball, the B8.

**A.R. 9.36 FIRST TOUCH—TEAM A PLAYER KEEPS TEAMMATE OUT OF END ZONE**

Fourth-and-4 on 50. A1 punts the ball and A2 and A3 run downfield to cover it before it goes into the end zone. A2 recovers the ball at the B4, and his momentum takes him toward the goal line. A3, while his foot is in the end zone, grabs his teammate A2 and prevents him from going into the end zone or touching the goal line.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B4. It is not a foul for a Team A player preventing a teammate from carrying a punt into Team B's end zone.

**TOUCHBACK—TEAM A CARRIES BALL INTO END ZONE OR TOUCHES BALL IN END ZONE**

**A.R. 9.37 TEAM A RECOVERS BALL AND CARRIES IT INTO END ZONE**

Fourth-and-10 on B40. After a punt, the ball bounces on the B8 and rolls to the B4, where A2 picks it up and runs the ball into the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback.

**A.R. 9.38 TEAM A RECOVERS BALL AND CARRIES IT INTO END ZONE—FOUL BY A OR B**

Fourth-and-10 on A45. A1 first touches and recovers the punt on the B4 and carries it into the end zone. Before A1 reaches the goal line: (a) A2 clips on B6; or (b) B1 clips on B6.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. The clip is enforced from the succeeding spot, which is the B20.

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. Spot of the clip is inside B's 20-yard line, so the penalty is enforced from the spot of the foul.

**IMPETUS**

**A.R. 9.39 IMPETUS—TEAM A BLOCKS TEAM B INTO BALL**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. The punted ball rolls to the B6. B1 steps aside and makes no attempt to field the ball. A2 blocks passive B1 into the ball, and the ball: (a) rolls over the end line; or (b) rolls to the B3 where A4 recovers.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback. The impetus is attributed to the block by A2.

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. A passive player blocked into a loose ball is deemed not to have touched it.

**Note:** If the punt is nearly at rest, and no Team B player is attempting to recover it, the Back Judge should blow it dead. If the ball is still alive, though, and a player blocks a passive opponent into the ball, sending the ball into the end zone, the impetus changes from the kick, fumble, or backward pass, and the new impetus is attributed to the blocking player. Furthermore, the touching by the passive opponent who was blocked into the ball is ignored.

**A.R. 9.40 TEAM A IMPETUS—B BATS KICK IN END ZONE**

Fourth-and-5 on B45. A's punt is muffed at the B8 by B1 (no new impetus). The punt goes into B's end zone, where there is a scramble for the ball. B2 bats the ball in the end zone backward over the end line.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B10. Illegal bat, but since A's impetus put the ball in the end zone, and Team B did not run with the ball, enforcement is from B's 20-yard line. This is a post-possession foul, and the end of the kick is the touchback spot.

**POST-POSSESSION**

**A.R. 9.41 POST-POSSESSION FOUL IN TEAM B END ZONE—NO RETURN**

Fourth-and-3 on A45. A1's punt is muffed by B1 at the B5 yard line, and as the ball continues to roll toward the sideline, B2 grabs A2 in the end zone, to prevent A2 from recovering the loose ball. (B2 is not making a personal attempt to recover.) The ball rolls out of bounds at the B2.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B1. Since Team B fouled in their end zone but did not run with the ball, the spot of the foul is deemed to be the B20. Therefore, this post-possession foul is enforced from the end of the kick (the B2) as that is the least advantageous spot for Team B.

**A.R. 9.42 POST-POSSESSION—TEAM B FOUL IN FIELD OF PLAY—TOUCHBACK**

Fourth-and-8 on A40. A1 punts. During the punt, B2 blocks low at the B8. The punted ball goes over the end line.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B4. Since there was no return, it is considered a touchback, and the penalty is enforced from the spot of B's foul if that spot is inside the 20-yard line (3-37).

**A.R. 9.43 POST-POSSESSION—FOUL IN TEAM B END ZONE—TEAM B RETURN**

Fourth-and-2 on B45. A1 punts, and B1 catches the ball on the B5 and returns to the B22. During the punt, B2 clips in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick B20. Post-possession foul with a return. Because Team B ran with the ball and the foul occurred in the end zone, the enforcement is a safety. If Team B had not run with the ball, enforcement would be from the end of the kick, to the B2½.

**A.R. 9.44 NOT POST-POSSESSION—TEAM A FIRST TOUCHES BUT IN POSSESSION AT END OF DOWN**

Fourth-and-5 on A20. B1 clips A2 at the B45 while the punt is in the air. The ball bounces and touches A1's foot at the B36. B1 then muffs it, and A3 falls on the ball at the B30.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Since Team B does not have possession of the ball at the end of the down, this is not a post-possession foul. Because the opponent has possession of the ball at the end of the down, the clip can be enforced from the dead ball spot, and enforcement of the foul negates the first touch violation.

**A.R. 9.45 TEAM A FOULS DURING KICK—B TOUCHES PUNT—RECOVERED BY A**

Fourth-and-16 on B38. B1 gives a valid fair catch signal at the B8, steps aside, and the ball bounces at the B8, where it touches B1's foot and rolls toward the sideline near the B2. A2 blocks B1 low, and A3 picks up the ball at the B2 and runs into the end zone.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-31 on A47. Previous spot enforcement. If Team B had not lost possession, the low block could also be enforced from the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 9.46 NOT POST-POSSESSION—TEAM B LOSES POSSESSION AFTER THE KICK**

Fourth-and-5 on A20. B1 blocks A2 below the waist at the B45 while the punt is in the air. The ball bounces and touches A1's foot at the B36. B1 then recovers the ball and runs to the B40 where he fumbles and A3 falls on the ball.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B25. Since Team B lost possession at some point after the kick, this is not a post-possession foul. Because the opponent has possession at the end of the down, the low block can be enforced from the dead ball spot, and enforcement of the foul negates the first touch.

**A.R. 9.47 NOT POST-POSSESSION—TEAM B LOSES POSSESSION AFTER THE KICK**

Fourth-and-12 on A38. During the punt, B1 holds A1 at the B45. B2 fields the punt at the B10 and returns it to the B15 where he fumbles. A2 scoops up the ball there and runs to the B5 where he fumbles. B2 recovers and is ultimately tackled at the B45.

**Ruling:** A's ball, fourth-and-2 on A48. This is not a post-possession foul, as Team B lost possession at one point during the down. The ball is returned to Team A, and the holding foul is a 10-yard penalty (with no automatic first down) because it occurred during a kick that went beyond the line (9-1-4(e)).

**SCRIMMAGE KICK CROSSES LINE OF SCRIMMAGE AND RETURNS BEHIND LINE**

**A.R. 9.48 PUNT OVER AND BACK—TOUCHED BY TEAM B—RECOVERED BY TEAM A**

Fourth-and-12 on A20. B1 partially blocks the punt and the ball bounces to the A22 where B2 attempts to recover but muffs the ball to the A18 where A2 picks up the ball, runs, and is tackled at the A25.

**Rulings:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A25. Team B touched the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.

**A.R. 9.49 PUNT OVER AND BACK—SIMULTANEOUS RECOVERY**

Fourth-and-5 on 50. B1 partially blocks the punt. The ball rolls to the B48 where it hits B2's leg and rolls back to the A48 where A1 and B1 fall on it.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A48. The simultaneous recovery of a legal kick by eligible opposing players belongs to the receivers.

**A.R. 9.50 PUNT OVER AND BACK—UNTOUCHED BEYOND LINE**

Fourth-and-10 on A25. A1's punt is partially blocked, hits on the A28, and then bounces back to the A22, untouched beyond the line. A2 recovers at the A22 and he: (a) is downed there; (b) runs with the ball to the A33; (c) runs with the ball to the A36; or (d) throws a pass from the A22, which is complete to A3 at the 50.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A22. If Team A recovers and does not advance, Team B gets the ball at the spot of recovery.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on A33. If Team A recovers and advances, but does not reach the line to gain, Team B gets the ball at the dead ball spot.
- (c) A's ball, first-and-10 on A36. If Team A recovers and advances beyond the line to gain, A has a first down.
- (d) B's ball, first-and-10 on A20. Illegal pass, as the ball has been beyond the line. The penalty is five yards from the previous spot and a loss of down.

**A.R. 9.51 PUNT OVER AND BACK—TOUCHED BEYOND LINE BY TEAM A**

Fourth-and-8 on A15. A1's punt is blocked and goes to the A17 where the ball deflects off A4's leg and rolls to the A14. Back A3 recovers the ball at the A13 and runs to the 50, where he fumbles the ball. B8 recovers the ball at the B48 and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team B. Kickoff B35. If there was not an accepted penalty, or if Team B lost possession during its run, it could still take the ball at the A17 due to the first touch by A4.

**A.R. 9.52 ILLEGAL FORMATION BY TEAM A—BLOCKED PUNT AND FORWARD PASS**

Fourth-and-9 on A10. Team A is in an illegal formation at the snap. A1's punt is partially blocked and goes to the A13 where it rebounds, untouched, to the A8. A1 recovers the loose ball at the A8 and throws a pass to A2 at the A15. A2 catches the ball and is tackled at the A16.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-goal on A5. Illegal pass, as the ball has been beyond the line. The penalty is five yards from the previous spot and a loss of down. The penalty for illegal formation is declined.

**FIELD GOAL CROSSES LINE OF SCRIMMAGE AND RETURNS**

**A.R. 9.53 FIELD GOAL OVER AND BACK—UNTOUCHED BEYOND LINE**

Fourth-and-10 on B25. A1's field goal attempt from the B33 is partially blocked, hits on the B22, and then bounces back to the B27, untouched by anyone beyond the line. The ball is recovered at the B27 and (a) A2 or B2 downs it there; (b) A2 runs with the ball to the B17; (c) A2 runs with the ball to the B14; d) A2 throws a pass from the B27, which is complete to A3 at the B10; or (e) B2 runs with the ball to the B31.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B27. The kick ended behind the line of scrimmage, so there is no "spot of kick" option.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B17. The kick ended behind the line of scrimmage, so there is no "spot of kick" option. Since A2 legally advanced the untouched kick recovered behind the line, his advance is legal, and Team B takes over on downs at the dead ball spot.
- (c) A's ball, first-and-10 on B14. The kick ended behind the line of scrimmage, so there is no "spot of kick" option. Since A2 legally advanced the untouched kick recovered behind the line, his advance is legal. A2 reached the line to gain, so it is a first down for Team A.
- (d) B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. Illegal forward pass, as the ball has been beyond the line. The penalty is five yards from the previous spot and a loss of down. The kick ended behind the line of scrimmage, so there is no "spot of kick" option.
- (e) B's ball, first-and-10 on B31. The kick ended behind the line of scrimmage, so there is no "spot of kick" option. Team B keeps the ball at the dead ball spot.

**Note:** Team B does not have the option to take the ball at the spot of the kick if: (1) B touches the ball beyond the line of scrimmage; (2) the kick ends behind the line; or (3) a Team B foul during the play is accepted.

**FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—INTERFERENCE WITH THE OPPORTUNITY—FAIR CATCH KICK**

**A.R. 9.54 FAIR CATCH—EXTEND PERIOD FOR FAIR CATCH KICK/SNAP**

Fourth-and-10 on A6. The score is 28-26 in favor of Team A. On the last play of the game, a partially blocked punt goes to the A28 where B1 gives a valid fair catch signal. No time remains on the clock. (a) B1 catches it on the A28; (b) A4 interferes on the A28, and the ball is then caught by B1; or (c) B1 muffs the ball on the A28 and it rolls out of bounds on A30.

**Rulings:**

- (a) The only option is a fair catch kick on A28. Extend period.
- (b) Fair catch kick or snap at the A14. Fair catch interference. Extend period.
- (c) Game over. The fair catch was not completed.

**A.R. 9.55 NO FAIR CATCH—NO EXTENSION**

Fourth-and-5 on A10. There are four seconds remaining in the game, and the score is tied. B1 gives a valid fair catch

signal at the A35. The wind carries the ball to B2 who did not signal. B2 catches the ball on the A30 as time runs out.

**Ruling:** Go to overtime. The ball is dead when caught by B2, and there is no extension.

**A.R. 9.56 FAIR CATCH INTERFERENCE—OPTION TO EXTEND PERIOD**

Fourth-and-10 on A12. On the last play of the half, B1 signals for a fair catch at the 50. A1 tackles B1 before the ball arrives. The ball hits A1 in the back and rebounds to the A28 where: (a) B2 recovers; or (b) A2 recovers.

**Rulings:** In both (a) and (b), B's ball, first-and-10 on A14, extend for fair catch kick or snap. Team B will enforce the FCI from the dead ball spot (A28) and extend for snap or fair catch kick (10-2-4, 10-2-5-b, 14-2-4).

**A.R. 9.57 INTERFERENCE WITH OPPORTUNITY—NO SIGNAL**

Fourth-and-7 on A11. With five seconds remaining in a tied game, B1 does not give a fair catch signal, and A2 contacts B1 at the A35 prior to B1 catching the ball. B1 is downed at the A35 as time expires.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A20. Extend for a scrimmage play only.

**A.R. 9.58 BLOCK IN BACK BY PUNTING TEAM—PUNT IN AIR OR ON THE GROUND**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. As A2 is running downfield after a punt, he pushes B2 in the back at the B40, as B2 is running downfield. The block happens: (a) while the kick is still in flight; (b) while the ball is rolling on the ground at the B10; or (c) after B3 has picked up the punt and is running with the ball at the B20. B3 is tackled at the B30.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B40 (or re-kick from A40). This foul can be tacked on to the end of the return, or it can be enforced at the previous spot. This is a 10-yard penalty.

(b) and (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. No foul.

**Note:** The prohibition against a kicking team player blocking in the back applies while the ball is in flight, during all scrimmage kicks.

**A.R. 9.59 DOUBLE PUNT—BEHIND LINE OF SCRIMMAGE**

Fourth-and-5 on A30. A2's punt is blocked and the ball rolls to the A16. A2 picks it up there and punts it again at the A30 with his body at or behind the A30 and his kicking foot and the ball just beyond the A30. The ball goes out of bounds at the B40.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Legal punt because the kicker's entire body and the ball were not beyond the line of scrimmage.

**A.R. 9.60 BLOCKED PUNT—SECOND PUNT—INELIGIBLES DOWNFIELD**

Fourth-and-10 on A30. At the snap, A1 and A2 release legally to go downfield. The punt is blocked behind the line of scrimmage. The blocked punt never crosses the line of scrimmage, and it is picked back up by the punter and punted again. Prior to the second punt, several Team A players had gone downfield and are downfield at the time of the second punt. The punted ball goes out of bounds untouched at the B10.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B10. It is legal for all Team A players to go downfield after the first punt.

**A.R. 9.61 PUNT—PLAYER DOWNFIELD—NOT WIDEST MAN**

Fourth-and-5 on A30. Back A2 goes in motion and is outside his tight end A3 by two yards when the ball is snapped. A3 goes downfield at the snap before the ball is kicked. B1 catches the punt at the B40, runs to the A10, is tackled, fumbles, and A4 recovers there.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-10 on A25. A3 is not eligible to go downfield before the ball is kicked (9-1-2). There is no option to enforce the foul from the dead ball spot because Team B lost the ball.

**A.R. 9.62 TEAM A FOULS AT SNAP—ENFORCEMENT OPTIONS**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. At the snap, tackle A3 is not on the line of scrimmage. B2 returns the punt to the B20.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-15 on A35, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B25. Team B has the option to enforce from the previous spot or the succeeding spot.

**Note:** All fouls by Team A prior to the receiving team securing possession include the option to enforce from the previous spot or the dead ball spot, provided that the receiving team does not lose possession.

**A.R. 9.63 TEAM A OR B FOUL DURING PUNT**

Fourth-and-10 on B40. While the punt is in the air, (a) at the B36, A2 grabs B2, who was attempting to block him, pulls him aside, and continues downfield to cover the punt; or (b) A2 pulls B2 backward at the B36, in a slingshot manner to propel himself downfield, or (c) B3 grabs A3 and pulls him to the ground at the B36. The punt rolls into the end zone for a touchback.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback. Not a foul. A kicking team player can use hands/arms to shed a block.

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B30, or fourth-and-20 on 50. The holding penalty by Team A is enforced from the dead ball spot (B20) or the previous spot (9-1-4).

(c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B10. The post possession foul is enforced from the end of the kick, the B20 (9-1-4).

**A.R. 9.64 TEAM A FOULS DURING PUNT—DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. A2 pulls B2 down by the facemask as A1 punts the ball. The ball is fielded at the B10 by B1,



who runs to the B20 where he fumbles. A2 recovers at the B20 and runs to the B15 where he fumbles. B2 recovers and is tackled at the B12.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B27, or fourth-and-25 on A35. Because the opponent has possession at the end of the down, the FMM can be enforced from either the previous spot or the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 9.65 PUNT TOUCHED BY TEAM A PLAYER OUT OF BOUNDS IN END ZONE**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. The punt is bouncing toward the pylon. A1 steps on the sideline at the B1 and then dives for the ball, which is still airborne one yard in the end zone and bats it back to the B2. A2 recovers and falls to the ground at the B3.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback. The ball is dead at its most forward point at the time it is touched by someone or something that is out of bounds. Since A1 did not reestablish inbounds, the ball is dead when A1 touches it. Since the ball is in the end zone at that point, the ball is dead in the end zone, resulting in a touchback. This is not a foul for A1 being out of bounds voluntarily, because he was not attempting to avoid a block; and it is not an illegal touch, because A1 is still an out of bounds player.

**A.R. 9.66 TEAM B SUBSTITUTES ENTER FIELD DURING PUNT PLAY—MULTIPLE TEAM B FOULS**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. A1 punts the ball to the B10 where B2 picks up the ball and returns it to the B40. (a) While the ball was rolling at the B10 (before B2 picked it up); or (b) during the return, substitutes from Team B came onto the field at the B30, thinking the play was over, and then returned to the bench area without interfering in the play. During B2's return, B3 blocks A4 in the back at the B26.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B5. Multiple fouls by Team B. The illegal substitution would be a post-possession foul enforced from the B10 to the B5. The block in the back would be enforced from the B26 to the B16.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B16. Multiple fouls by Team B. The illegal substitution occurs during the return and would, therefore, be enforced from the spot of the foul (B30), five yards. The block in the back would be enforced from the B26.

**A.R. 9.67 TEAM A SUBSTITUTES ENTER FIELD DURING PUNT PLAY—DOUBLE FOULS**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. A1 punts the ball to the B10 where B2 picks up the ball and returns it to the B40. (a) While the ball was rolling loose at the B10 (before B2 picked it up); or (b) during the return, substitutes from Team A came onto the field at the B35, thinking the play was over, and then returned to the bench area without interfering in the play. During B2's return, B3 blocks A4 in the back at the B26.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B16, or fourth-and-10 on 50. Double foul with a change of possession (14-5-2).
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B26. Double foul after a change of possession. The enforcement spot for double fouls change of possession is the spot where B's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. Here, that is the spot ball spot, whichever is least advantageous for Team B (14-5-2-Exc. 4).

**A.R. 9.68 PUNT FROM BEYOND LINE**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. Punter A1 scrambles after a bad snap and runs to the B45 where he punts the ball out of bounds at the B25.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. This is a punt, even though it is from beyond the line, and it is therefore B's ball at the dead ball spot. All rules on scrimmage kicks apply (9-1-1, Note 3). Team A's 5-yard penalty is a "spot foul" and a loss of down.

**A.R. 9.69 PUNT—DOUBLE FOUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-5 on A45. Receiver B1 holds kicker A4 on the B30 during the punt. B2 catches the punt at the B10 and runs to the B45 where he is tackled. During the return, A3 trips B2 at the B40.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B10. Double fouls after a change of possession are offset at the spot where B's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. Here, since B1's foul is a post possession foul, that enforcement spot, (and therefore where these double fouls offset), would be either the end of the kick or the spot of B's foul, whichever is least advantageous for Team B (14-5-2-Exc. 4).

**A.R. 9.70 KICKING TEAM PLAYER OUT OF BOUNDS DURING PUNT**

Fourth-and-12 on A21. At the snap, A1, who is lined up wide on punt coverage, runs out of bounds untouched to avoid being blocked by B1 and B2. A1 returns to the field of play at the A26. B1 attempts to catch the punted ball at the B41 but muffs it, and the ball rolls to the B19 where B3 and A4 simultaneously recover the ball.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-17 on A16 or B's ball, first-and-10 on B24. Team B has the option to enforce the foul for a player illegally out of bounds on a kick at the previous spot or the dead ball spot. Simultaneous possession of a kick belongs to Team B.

**A.R. 9.71 KICKING TEAM PLAYER OUT OF BOUNDS DURING PUNT—RETURNS INBOUNDS**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. During the punt, flyer A2 is blocked out of bounds at the A45 and he (a) begins to run at an angle to return inbounds just after being forced out and returns inbounds at the B45, or (b) does not immediately run at an angle but runs parallel to the sideline and then returns inbounds at the B45. B3 fair catches the kick at the B20.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. No foul for not returning inbounds legally.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B35 or A's ball fourth-and-25 on A25. Unsportsmanlike conduct for not returning inbounds as quickly as is reasonable after being blocked out of bounds.

**A.R. 9.72 BLOCKING OUT OF BOUNDS DURING PUNT/DURING RETURN**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. A1's punt is fielded by B1 at the B10 and returned to the 50. B2 blocks A2 causing A2 to go out of bounds, and B3 then immediately goes out of bounds and blocks A2 again at the B40 while they are both out of bounds. The block by B3 occurs (a) during the kick; or (b) during the return.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B5. It is unnecessary roughness to go out of bounds to block an opponent during a punt. This is a post-possession foul.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. No foul. This action did not happen during the punt (12-2-8-c).

**A.R. 9.73 TOUCHBACK—DOUBLE FOUL WITH CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-3 on B36. During the punt, B2 clips A2 at the B16. The ball lands at the B6 and A3 bats the ball at the B4 into the end zone where B2 recovers the ball and runs for a touchdown. Team A had six players on the line of scrimmage.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-3 on B36, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B8. This is a double foul with a change of possession. Both the illegal formation and illegal bat fouls by Team A were before the change of possession, and the clipping foul by Team B was a post possession foul. The ball was dead when it hit in the end zone (untouched by B), so the result of the play is a touchback. Enforcement of B2's foul is from the spot of the foul since it is behind the end of the kick (B20). Because this is a kick play, Team B also has the option to require a replay of the down.

**A.R. 9.74 BALL TOUCHES OFFICIAL INBOUNDS DURING SCRIMMAGE KICK**

Fourth-and-5 on A45. A1 punts the ball to the B2 where it bounces and hits the Back Judge who was straddling the goal line. The ball bounces back to the B2 where it is downed by A2. If the ball had not struck the official, it would have gone into the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B2. If the ball touches an official who is inbounds, the touching is ignored (7-2-2).

**A.R. 9.75 TEAM A FIRST TOUCHES AND TEAM B ILLEGALLY KICKS PUNT**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. A1's punt is first touched by A2 on the B2. The ball then bounces to the B6 where B5 kicks it into and out of the back of the end zone.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick A20. The illegal kick is a post-possession foul, which is enforced from the spot of the foul or the end of the kick, whichever is least beneficial to the receiving team. Because Team B's impetus caused the ball to go through the end zone, enforcement from the end of the kick results in a safety. The first touch violation is nullified by the accepted penalty.

**A.R. 9.76 BLOCKED PUNT—ILLEGALLY KICKED BALL**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. A1's punt is blocked at the A40, and the ball rolls loose on the ground at the A47, when A1 kicks it downfield. The ball hits B1 at the B45 and bounces out of bounds (a) at the B45 or (b) at the A45.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A40. Illegally kicking the ball during a loose ball behind the line of scrimmage is enforced from the previous spot with a loss of down. (Option to enforce from the dead ball spot.)
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on A35. Because the ball was punted, and because it was B's ball at the end of the punt play, the yardage can be enforced from the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 9.77 PUNT—ILLEGAL TOUCH**

Fourth-and-4 on A45. During the punt, flyer A2 inadvertently steps on the sideline at the B30, (not making an effort to avoid a player and not blocked out), as he is running downfield to cover the punt. He continues to run, immediately taking an angle and reestablishing himself in bounds, and falls on the ball (a) at the B5; or (b) at the B2.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Fourth-and-9 on A40 or B's ball, first-and-10 on B10. Illegal touch by A2. No kicking team player who has been out of bounds, may touch or recover a punt beyond the line until it has been touched by another player from either team. If a punt team player goes out of bounds on his own to avoid a block, it is a foul. If he steps out inadvertently, it is not a foul for going out of bounds, but he still cannot be the first to touch the kick.
- (b) Fourth-and-9 on A40 or B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. The foul for illegal touching after having been out of bounds, if accepted, has a touchback option, as the touching occurred inside the five-yard line.

**A.R. 9.78 PUNT—MULTIPLE FOULS TEAM A—ILLEGAL TOUCH AND POK**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. A1's punt is at the B17 when A2, who had reestablished back inbounds after having gone out of bounds on his own to avoid a block, touches the rolling punt there. The punt then rolls out of bounds at the B14.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B19, or fourth-and-15 on A45. Multiple fouls by A2 for a player illegally out of bounds on a kick, and illegal touching of a kick. There is no option to move the ball to the spot of the first touch and also enforce the penalty from that spot.

**A.R. 9.79 DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION—FOUL DURING RETURN**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. B1 catches the punt on the B25 and runs to the B35 where he fumbles. A2 recovers the fumble at the B34 and runs to the B33 where he fumbles, and B2 recovers and is downed at the B30. During B1's run, B4 (a) illegally blocks in the back at the B37; (b) illegally blocks in the back at the B33; or (c) blocks A4 below the waist at the B32.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B25. Declining B's foul results in B's ball at the B30. When accepted, it is enforced from the B35 as a foul on a running play. There is no option to enforce B's foul from the dead ball spot.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B23. Enforcement is from the spot of foul since it is behind the spot of the fumble.
- (c) A's ball, first-and-10 on B19. Since the low block is a personal foul, Team A gets the ball back and the penalty is enforced from where Team A recovered B1's fumble.

## **RULE 10 FAIR CATCH—SIGNALS/INTERFERENCE**

### **A.R. 10.1 NO FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—NO PROTECTION**

Fourth-and-5 on 50. B1 gives a valid fair catch signal at the B10. The punted ball hits B1 in the hands and goes up in the air as B1 falls to the ground at the B12. A2 pushes B2 out of the way at the B10, catches the ball, and scores. B1 could not have caught the ball.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-goal on B10. The ball is dead where caught. B2 does not have protection, as he did not signal.

### **A.R. 10.2 FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—BLOCKED INTO PUNT**

Fourth-and-5 on 50. B1 signals for a fair catch at the B10. B1 then steps forward to the B13, allowing the ball to hit the ground behind him. A1 then blocks passive B1 (high) into the ball forcing it into the end zone. A2 recovers there.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback. No foul by A1, as a fair catch is no longer possible once the ball hits the ground. In addition, it is not a foul for fair catch interference, because B1 is not in position to catch the kick. B1 is deemed not to have touched the ball. The block by A1 is the impetus that put the ball into the end zone.

### **A.R. 10.3 NO FAIR CATCH—CATCH COMPLETED OUT OF BOUNDS**

Fourth-and-12 on A12. The punt is shanked off the side of the kicker's foot. B1 is running toward the sideline at the B48 and gives a valid fair catch signal. He catches the ball with one foot inbounds but his second step is out of bounds. Time in the game expires on the play.

**Ruling:** Game over. There is no option for a fair catch kick, as the fair catch was not completed inbounds.

### **A.R. 10.4 FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—BALL HITS TEAM A PLAYER—LEGAL ADVANCE BY TEAM B**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. B1 gives a legal fair catch signal at the B15 as the ball goes over his head. The ball in flight hits A2 at the B10, who is not near a Team B player. The ball bounces into the air toward B1, who catches it at the B12 and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Touchdown, Team B. Kickoff B35. The advance by B1 is legal, since A2 touched the ball after the signal. There is no foul by A2, because there was not a Team B player in position to catch the kick.

### **A.R. 10.5 ADVANCE AFTER GIVING FAIR CATCH SIGNAL**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. B1 gives a valid fair catch signal at the B10 and the ball hits (a) the ground; (b) A2 at the B10 while in the air; or (c) the ground and then bounces off A2's leg. B1 or B2 then recovers the ball at the B15 and runs to the 50 where he is tackled.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B15. The ball is dead when recovered by Team B.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on A35. Fair catch interference. Legal return by Team B because the ball was touched by Team A. Because the opponent has possession at the end of the down, the fair catch interference can be enforced from the dead ball spot.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Legal return by Team B because the ball was touched by Team A.

## **INVALID SIGNAL**

### **A.R. 10.6 INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—PUNT HITS GROUND**

Fourth-and 5 on A35. The punt is short and B1 gives a fair catch signal at the B40 after the ball hits the ground at the B44. B2 picks up the ball at the B44 and scores.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Five-yard penalty enforced from the spot of the foul for giving a signal after the ball hit the ground. The ball is dead when recovered by B2 after the ball hit the ground.

### **A.R. 10.7 INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—KICKOFF HITS GROUND**

On an onside kick from the A35, A1 "tops" the ball causing it to go down into the ground and then bounce high in the air to the A45 where it comes down to waiting B1. B1 signals for a fair catch, but just before B1 catches the ball, A2 blocks him aside and the ball hits the ground and is recovered by B3 at the A45.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Invalid fair catch signal as the ball had hit the ground before the signal. The action by A2 was legal both because the ball had hit the ground (no interference with the opportunity), and because the block occurred beyond the receiver's restraining line after the ball hit the ground. The foul for an invalid signal is enforced from the spot of the foul.

### **A.R. 10.8 INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—ANOTHER TEAM B PLAYER CATCHES**

Fourth-and-5 on A40. B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal at the B14. The wind carries the punted ball in the air to the B8 where B2 catches the ball.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B8. Team A would take the result of the play since the penalty would place the ball at the B9. The ball is dead when caught.

### **A.R. 10.9 INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—INTERFERENCE WITH OPPORTUNITY TO CATCH KICK**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. A1 punts and B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal at the B25. A2 contacts B1 prior to the catch. B1 muffs the ball, and it rolls to the B15 where: (a) B2 recovers, or (b) A3 recovers.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B25, or Team B has the option to replay. Double foul with a change of possession (14-5-2).
- (b) A's ball, fourth-and-10 on A40. Replay. Double foul. Because Team B lost possession during the down, its foul is not post-possession, so the fouls offset at the previous spot (14-5-2).

**A.R. 10.10 INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—MUFF BY TEAM B**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. A1 punts and B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal and muffs the ball up into the air. B1 could have caught the muff, but A2 hits B1 at the B18, and B1 muffs the ball again. A2 then recovers at the B15.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Legal contact after the invalid signal. Team A would decline the foul for invalid signal.

**A.R. 10.11 INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—CONTACT BY TEAM A AFTER CATCH IS MADE**

Fourth-and-10 on B45. B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal at the B6. B1 catches the punt there and is immediately tackled by A2.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. There is no foul by A2 for fair catch interference, or a dead ball personal foul, since B1's signal was invalid.

**SIGNAL AND LEGAL/ILLEGAL BLOCK**

**A.R. 10.12 VALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—BLOCK BY SIGNALER**

Fourth-and-5 on B45. B1 signals for a fair catch at the B10 and lets the ball go over his head. A1 touches the ball at the B4, and B1 then blocks A1. A1 falls on the ball at the B2.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B4. Team B can take the ball at the spot of the first touch by A. It is legal for the signaler to block after the ball is touched by a teammate or opponent.

**A.R. 10.13 VALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—ILLEGAL BLOCK BY SIGNALER**

Fourth-and-10 on A20. B1 gives a valid fair catch signal at the B35, steps aside, and lets the punt go over his head. The ball bounces at the B32, and while it is rolling at the B30, B1 blocks A2 above the waist from the side at the B32, which allows B1 to recover the ball at the B30.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B17. Illegal block after giving a fair catch signal. Enforcement is from the spot of the block by B1.

**A.R. 10.14 INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—PUNT INTO END ZONE—DEAD BALL FOUL BY B**

Fourth-and-4 on B40. B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal at the B10 and allows the punt to go over his head and roll into and out of the end zone, after which B2 clips in the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B5. Invalid signal is a spot foul. The dead ball clip would be declined as it would be enforced from the B20.

**A.R. 10.15 VALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—FIRST TOUCH—LEGAL RECOVERY AND ADVANCE**

Fourth-and-8 on A45. B1 signals for a fair catch on the B10 but allows the ball to hit the ground behind him. At the B1, A1 bats the ball back to the B4. B1 pushes A2 from behind to recover the ball and advances to the B12.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B12. No foul for unnecessary roughness or block in the back since a player may push an opponent in the back in a personal attempt to recover a loose ball. No foul for blocking after a signal because the ball was touched by a teammate or opponent. Legal advance after a signal because the ball was touched by an opponent.

**A.R. 10.16 VALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—TEAM A RECOVERY OF TEAM B'S MUFF**

Fourth-and-5 on A35. B1 gives a valid fair catch signal at the B25. B1 attempts to make the catch but muffs the ball. A2, who had been blocked out of bounds, reestablishes, and recovers the muffed punt at the B23.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B23. Legal recovery because the punt was touched by a Team B player before the recovery.

**A.R. 10.17 INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—ILLEGAL BLOCK—SIMULTANEOUS RECOVERY OF PUNT**

Fourth-and-4 on A34. B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal at the B35, steps aside, and blocks A2 at the B36. The punt rolls to the B18 where A3 and B2 simultaneously recover the ball.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B18. Team A can take the result of the play and decline the fouls for invalid fair catch signal and for illegally blocking after a valid or invalid signal, since they are spot fouls (14-1-1) The ball is awarded to the receivers if there is a simultaneous catch or recovery of a legal or illegal kick.

**A.R. 10.18 INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—ILLEGAL BLOCK**

Fourth-and-12 on B38. B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal at the B8. B1 allows the punt to bounce, and it rolls toward the end zone. B1 then blocks A2 above the waist from the side at the B6 when the ball is at the B4. A4 falls on the ball in the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. Accept the penalty for blocking after giving a signal (valid or invalid), which is enforced from the spot of the foul. The foul for invalid signal would be declined (14-1-3).

**A.R. 10.19 VALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—LEGAL BLOCK/ILLEGAL ADVANCE**

Fourth-and-4 on B45. A1 punts, and B1 gives a valid fair catch signal at the B10, but muffs the ball, and it hits the ground. B2 then muffs the ball, after which B1 pushes A1 out of the way at the B8. B2 picks up the ball at the B6 and runs to the B30.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B6. B1 can block after the ball is touched by a teammate or opponent, but Team B cannot advance until the ball is touched by an opponent. The play should be blown dead when B2 recovers the ball.

## **FAIR CATCH INTERFERENCE**

### **A.R. 10.20 FAIR CATCH INTERFERENCE—PUNT HITS TEAM A PLAYER**

Fourth-and-5 on B40. B1 gives a valid fair catch signal at the B5. The punt hits A2 on the shoulder at the B6, while he is standing directly in front of B1. B1 catches the ball at the B6 and runs to the 50. B1 fumbles at the 50 and A2 recovers there.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B21. Fair catch interference. Penalize 15 yards from the spot of the foul. The advance by B1 is legal because the ball touched an opponent. Team B does not have the option to add the foul to the dead ball spot because Team A is in legal possession.

### **A.R. 10.21 FAIR CATCH INTERFERENCE—PUNT MUFFED**

Fourth-and-5 on 50. B1 gives a valid fair catch signal at the B10. The punt hits B1 in the hands and goes in the air. A2 pushes B1 out of the way and catches the ball at the B10 as B1 was going to catch the ball. A2 runs the ball into the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B10. Fair catch interference. There is no distance penalty in this situation. B is awarded a fair catch at the spot of the foul (10-2-2-Item 3-Penalty).

### **A.R. 10.22 FAIR CATCH INTERFERENCE—PERSONAL FOUL**

Fourth-and-2 on A16. B1 gives a valid fair catch signal at the A40. B1 is about to catch the punted ball at the A40 when A2 grabs B1's facemask prior to the catch and flips him to the ground. The ball goes over B1's head to the A45 where B2 picks it up and scores.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A25, or fourth-and-10 on A8. The ball is dead when B2 recovers it, since B1 gave a fair catch signal. The foul for fair catch interference is enforced from the spot of that foul, and Team B can fair catch kick or snap. The facemask foul is a multiple foul which would be enforced from the previous spot or the dead ball spot (A45) for a fair catch kick or snap (10-2-4, 10-2-5-b, 14-2-4).

### **A.R. 10.23 FAIR CATCH INTERFERENCE—PERSONAL FOUL**

Fourth-and-10 on A30. Punter A1 kicks the ball toward the sideline. B2 signals for a fair catch at the B29. A5 hits B2 helmet to helmet before he can complete the catch. The ball hits B2 and rolls out of bounds at the B33.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B48 (fair catch or snap) or A's ball, fourth-and-25 on A15. FCI and UNR. Team B has the option of enforcing the FCI or UNR from the dead ball spot (B33) and putting the ball in play with a snap or fair catch kick from the B48 (10-2-4, 10-2-5-b, 14-2-4). Team B also has the option to enforce the foul for UNR at the previous spot.

### **A.R. 10.24 FAIR CATCH INTERFERENCE—TEAM A BLOCKS PASSIVE TEAM B PLAYER INTO SIGNALER**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. A1 punts and B1 signals for a fair catch at the B20. B2 is standing in front of B1 (not blocking) and is driven back into him by A4, causing B1 to muff the ball. A6 recovers the loose ball at the B25.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B35 (fair catch or snap). Fair catch interference by A4 for causing a passive player to contact the receiver. Team B does not have to option to add the foul to the dead ball spot because Team A is in legal possession (10-2-4, 10-2-5-b, 14-2-4).

## **FAIR CATCH**

### **A.R. 10.25 FAIR CATCH INTERFERENCE—DEAD BALL PERSONAL FOUL—IN TEAM B'S END ZONE**

Fourth-and-10 on B40. B1 is confused about where he is on the field and gives a valid fair catch signal while standing in his end zone. A2, covering the punt, tackles B1: (a) before; or (b) after B1 completes the fair catch in his end zone.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b): B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. The penalty for either fair catch interference, or a late hit on the signaler after a fair catch is made in the end zone, is enforced from the 20-yard line. If this happens on the last play of a half, the period could be extended for a snap or fair catch kick in (a), or for a fair catch kick only in (b). In (b), Team B could also decline the extension, and carry the dead ball foul over to the second half or overtime.

## **INTERFERENCE WITH OPPORTUNITY**

### **A.R. 10.26 INTERFERENCE WITH OPPORTUNITY**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. B1 runs from the B8 to the B10 in an effort to catch the punted ball (no fair catch signal given). A2 stays in B1's way at the B10 without any contact but hinders B1's chance to catch the ball. The ball bounces at the B10, hits B1's leg, and rolls to the B5 where: (a) B1 recovers; or (b) A2 recovers and runs the ball into the end zone.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b): B's ball, first-and-10 on B25. Even if no signal has been given, B1 must be given an unhindered opportunity to catch the ball. The penalty is enforced from the spot of the foul. If B1 had possession of the ball beyond the B10, the penalty could be enforced from the dead ball spot.

### **A.R. 10.27 NO FAIR CATCH SIGNAL GIVEN—PUNT RECEIVER CONTACTED AFTER TOUCHING KICK—LEGAL**

Fourth-and-Six on A49. A1's punt is partially blocked, and the ball goes into the air to the B47. B1 tries to catch the ball at the B46, but immediately after he touches the ball, he is run into by A6, causing him to muff it. The ball rolls to the B49 where A3 recovers.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B49. If a Team B player does not give a valid fair catch signal, he may be contacted (but not roughed) immediately after he touches the punt.

### **A.R. 10.28 INTERFERENCE WITH OPPORTUNITY**

Fourth-and-2 on 50. The punt is partially blocked by B1, and A2 and B1 both jump up to try to catch the ball at the B48. A2 catches the ball at the B48 and runs to the B40.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A37. Since the punted ball crossed the LOS, it is interference with the opportunity to make a catch. The play should be blown dead when A2 gains possession.

**A.R. 10.29 INTERFERENCE WITH OPPORTUNITY—ONSIDE KICK**

On an onside kick from the A35, the ball is kicked directly into the air, and A1 leaps from the A44 and catches the ball on the A46, prior to the ball being touched by anyone. B1 could have caught the ball at the A45.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A30. Interference with the opportunity to make a catch.

***Note:** If the ball was kicked down into the ground from the tee, there would be no interference with the opportunity, as the rule only applies to a kick that has not touched the ground, Team A would have a legal recovery at the A46, and no time would run off the clock.*

**A.R. 10.30 FAIR CATCH MADE—LATE HIT ON SIGNALER—LAST PLAY OF HALF**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. B1 gives a valid fair catch signal and catches the punt at the B10. A2 then tackles B1 after he completes the catch. Time runs out in the half.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B25 (extend for fair catch kick only) or Team B could elect not to extend the half and have the personal foul enforced on the second half kickoff or overtime.

**A.R. 10.31 KICK CATCH INTERFERENCE AND PERSONAL FOUL**

Fourth-and-10 on A45. A1's punt is in the air as B2, who (a) signaled for; or (b) did not signal for a fair catch, prepares to catch the punt at the B15. B2 muffs the punt and as he attempts to catch the muff, A4 lowers his helmet and hits B2 in the chin. The ball is recovered by A6. Officials penalize A4 and disqualify him.

**Ruling:** (a) and (b): B's ball, first-and-10 on B30, or A's ball, fourth-and-25 on A30. If it were the only foul, enforcement for fair catch interference after a muff in (a) would be B's ball at the spot of the foul. Because B2 didn't signal, the action in (b) would be legal if it were not a personal foul. However, because both (a) and (b) are personal fouls, they can be enforced 15 yards from the spot of the foul or from the previous spot. They could also be tacked on to the dead ball spot if B was in possession.

## RULE 11 SCORING

### TOUCHDOWN

#### A.R. 11.1 TOUCHDOWN—CONTROL IN AIR IN END ZONE AND DRIVEN BACK INTO FIELD OF PLAY

First-and-goal on B8. Tight end A2 goes into the end zone and leaps to catch a pass from A1. While he is airborne in the end zone, A2 controls the ball and is driven back to the 1-yard line by B2, where A2 lands on both feet, and not sure if he had scored, breaks free from B2, runs and is tackled at the 1-yard line.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. Once A2 comes down and completes the catch, the play is over, and he is given his forward progress.

#### A.R. 11.2 TOUCHDOWN—BATTED PASS IN END ZONE

Third-and-3 on B16. A1 throws a forward pass to end A2 along the end line. A2 bats the ball toward end A3 who catches it in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. A forward pass can be batted in any direction by either team in the end zone (12-5-1).

#### A.R. 11.3 TOUCHDOWN—TEAM A BATS BALL INTO OWN END ZONE

Fourth-and-12 on A14. The punt is partially blocked, and the ball rolls to the A4 where A2 bats it toward his goal and B1 falls on it in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team B. Kickoff B35. No foul.

#### A.R. 11.4 TOUCHDOWN—LAST PLAY OF GAME

First-and-10 on B20. Team A trails 21-17 with :03 seconds left in the game. QBA1 throws a pass to A3 in the end zone who catches it for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Game over Team A wins 23-21. There is no option to attempt the Try.

### TRY

#### A.R. 11.5 TRY KICK ATTEMPT—BLOCKED—SUCCESSFUL CONVERSION BY TEAM B

On a Try attempt from the 15-yard line, the kick is blocked and returned by B2 across Team A's goal line.

**Ruling:** Two points for Team B, Team A kicks off from A35. The Try is not over when Team B gains possession of the ball. Any time either team scores what would normally be a touchdown during a Try it is worth two points.

#### A.R. 11.6 2-POINT TRY ATTEMPT—SUCCESSFUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION

On a Try attempt from the 2-yard line, QBA1's pass is intercepted by B2 in Team B's end zone. B2 attempts to run it out, but is hit and fumbles, with A4 recovering the ball in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Two points for Team A. Team A kicks off from A35. The Try is not over when Team B gains possession.

#### A.R. 11.7 TRY KICK ATTEMPT—TOUCHING BY TEAM A

On a Try attempt from the 15-yard line, the kick is blocked and rolls to the B10-yard line, where A2 touches the ball while attempting to recover it, and muffs it into the end zone, where it is touched by B2 and then recovered by A3.

**Ruling:** Try no good, kickoff A35. A Try kick is a scrimmage down so rules for scrimmage kicks apply. A2's first touching violation nullifies the recovery by A3 in the end zone.

#### A.R. 11.8 2-POINT TRY ATTEMPT—SUCCESSFUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION—TEAM A FOUL

On a Try attempt from the 2-yard line, A1 runs and fumbles the ball at the line of scrimmage. B1 recovers the loose ball and during his run A2 grabs and twists B1's facemask, causing B1 to fumble the ball. A3 picks up the loose ball and runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Try no good, kickoff A35. When Team A commits a foul prior to a last change of possession, its foul is enforced as customary. Enforcement of A2's foul would negate the touchdown, so the Try is unsuccessful. Because Team A's foul negates a successful Try, the distance penalty is not enforced on the kickoff.

#### A.R. 11.9 TRY KICK ATTEMPT—SUCCESSFUL—TEAM B FOUL

On a Try attempt from the 15-yard line, the kick is good. B2 is offside.

**Ruling:** One-point Try successful, kickoff A40; or re-Try at the B1 (run or pass), kickoff A35. All Team B fouls on a Try that do not result in a re-Try, negate a score, or offset with a Team A foul, are enforced on the ensuing kickoff.

#### A.R. 11.10 TRY KICK ATTEMPT – 2 YARD LINE

On a Try attempt from the B2, A lines up in an offensive formation and then shifts into a Try kick formation. A1's Try kick goes through the uprights.

**Ruling:** Unsuccessful Try. The ball must be snapped at the B15 for a Try kick.

#### A.R. 11.11 TRY—FOUL BY THE DEFENSE

On a 2-point Try, the ball is originally spotted on the right hash mark at the B2. A1 hands off to A2 who goes wide left around the left hashmark and is tackled on the B1 by the facemask.

**Ruling:** Re-Try by kick at the B7½ or run/pass B1-yard line, anywhere between the hash marks.

**Note:** The enforcement of all single fouls on a re-Try, other than defensive pass interference, is from the previous spot, or the "other spot."



**A.R. 11.12 TRY KICK ATTEMPT—MUFF/FUMBLE—TEAM B KICKS BALL INTO OWN END ZONE**

On a Try from the B15, holder A2 muffs a poor snap, and the ball rolls to the B17. Kicker A1 recovers and runs to the B4, where he fumbles to the B3. A3 reaches down to pick up the ball and B3 deliberately kicks it away from him. The ball (a) hits the pylon; or (b) goes out of bounds at the B2.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Option for Team A: Re-Try from B1 (run or pass); or 1-point safety awarded to Team A, kickoff A45. The result of the play is a safety, so if that option is elected, the Team B foul is enforced on the kickoff, because it is a B foul during a Try that is not used for a re-Try, to negate a score, or as part of a double foul. If A3 had recovered the ball at the B3, the play would have been blown dead since he was not the fumbling player.
- (b) Option for Team A: Re-Try from B 7 ½ (kick); or re-Try from B1 (run or pass); or decline the option to re-Try and enforce the penalty on the kickoff, A45. If choosing to re-Try from the same spot, the penalty is enforced half the distance from the previous spot, unless the foul is defensive pass interference. If choosing to re-Try from the 'other spot', the penalty is always half the distance.

**A.R. 11.13 2-POINT TRY ATTEMPT—DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE**

On a Try attempt from the 2-yard line, B3 interferes with eligible receiver A3 in the end zone, and (a) B3 intercepts the pass intended for A3 and falls to the ground; (b) A3 catches the ball in the end zone despite the interference; or (c) B3 pulls down the receiver by the facemask before the pass arrives; the pass is incomplete.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Re-Try from the 1-yard line, (run or pass); or re-Try by a kick attempt from the B7½. After enforcement of the foul, Team A can elect to again attempt a 2-point Try from the 1-yard line, because the defensive pass interference was in the end zone, or if Team A chooses enforcement from the "other spot", the enforcement is half the distance from the "other spot", regardless of where the DPI occurred.
- (b) The Try is good, KO A35. (Although B fouls that are not used for a re-Try, to negate a score, or as part of a double foul, are enforced on the kickoff, there is no specific yardage for defensive pass interference, so there is no yardage to enforce on the kickoff).
- (c) Re-Try for 2 points from the B½ yard line; or Try kick from the B3 ¾ yard line (both the defensive pass interference and facemask fouls are enforced); or decline the re-Try and enforce the personal foul (facemask) on the kickoff and kick from the 50. Team A does not have the option to enforce the defensive pass interference foul on the re-Try and enforce the personal foul on the kickoff. If one foul is going to be enforced on the Try, they both must be enforced on the Try.

***Note:** Any time defensive pass interference is enforced from the 'other spot', the penalty is half the distance to the goal, regardless of where the foul occurred. Just as with normal pass plays, if the defensive pass interference is also a personal foul, both fouls are enforced. However, they cannot be separated to enforce one on the re-Try and one on the kickoff.*

**A.R. 11.14 TRY KICK ATTEMPT - UNSUCCESSFUL TRY—DEFENSE FOULS**

Near the end of the game, Team A scores and trails 21-16. On the Try kick from the B15, the kick is no good and (a) B3 lines up offside or (b) B2 forearms the center to the head just after the snap.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Re-Try (anywhere between the hash marks) from the B10 for a kick attempt; or go for 2-points from the B1; or decline the re-Try and enforce the 5-yard penalty on the kickoff and kick from the A40.
- (b) Re-Try (anywhere between the hash marks) from the B 7½ for a kick attempt; or go for 2-points from the B1; or decline the re-Try and enforce the 15-yard penalty on the kickoff and kick from the 50 (11-3-3-Item 4(a)).

**A.R. 11.15 LIVE BALL AND DEAD BALL TEAM B FOULS ON THE TRY**

On a Try kick from the B15, B1 is offside at the snap. The kick is missed, and B2 then shoves A2, knocking him to the ground.

**Ruling:** Re-Try from B10 (kick); or re-Try B1 (2-point) – enforcing the offside penalty and declining the personal foul. Or Team A can decline the opportunity to re-Try and enforce B2's personal foul on the kickoff – Kickoff 50. Only one of the Team B multiple fouls can be accepted, and if the live ball foul is declined, the Try is over, and the personal foul can only be enforced on the kickoff.

**A.R. 11.16 UNSUCCESSFUL TRY – OFFENSIVE FOUL**

On a Try attempt from the B2, A1 runs and fumbles the ball at the line of scrimmage. At the snap, A2 grabs and pulls B2's facemask prior to the fumble. B1 recovers the loose ball, runs, and fumbles the ball at the B20. A2 picks up the loose ball, runs, and is tackled at the B1.

**Ruling:** Unsuccessful Try. Kickoff A20. The facemask foul can be enforced on the kickoff because it was not used to negate a score or offset another foul.

**A.R. 11.17 TRY KICK ATTEMPT—5 VS. 15**

During a successful or unsuccessful Try kick from the B15, B2 is called for leverage. A1 was illegally in motion at the snap.

**Ruling:** Re-Try at B7½ (kick) or B1 (run or pass) (A's option). This is a 5 vs. 15, as there was no change of possession. There is no option for Team A to decline the re-Try and enforce the yardage on the ensuing kickoff, because the fouls are "used" as a part of the double foul enforcement. When fouls by both teams occur during a Try down with no change of possession, the down must be replayed. The only exception to this would be a clean hands score (11-3-3-item 5).

**A.R. 11.18 BEFORE SNAP FOR TRY KICK ATTEMPT—5 VS. 15**

Before the ball is snapped on a Try from the B15, A5 false starts, and B2 comes across the line and knocks A6 to the ground. Unnecessary roughness is called on B2.

**Ruling:** Re-Try at B1 (run or pass) or B7½ (kick), kickoff at A35; or Re-Try at B15 (kick) or B2 (run or pass), kickoff at 50. (A's option). This is a pre-snap 5 vs. 15 with the major foul on Team B. Since the dead ball fouls prevented the snap, Team A can either enforce the major foul on the Try or enforce it on the kickoff (14-5-1-Exc. 3)

**Note:** If the major foul of a pre-snap 5 vs. 15 is on Team A, there is no option for Team B to enforce the penalty yardage on the kickoff. Pre-snap fouls by Team A (after the ready for play), must be enforced on the succeeding Try down.

**A.R. 11.19 TRY KICK ATTEMPT—5 VS. 15—CLEAN HANDS SCORE**

During a successful Try from the B15, B2 is offside, and after the ball is dead, A2 is called for unnecessary roughness.

**Ruling:** The Try kick is good. Kickoff A20. This is a clean hands score, so the score counts, and the foul against A2 is enforced on the kickoff. (14-4-9-Item 3-Exc. 2)

**A.R. 11.20 DROP KICK TRY ATTEMPT—SUCCESSFUL—TEAM B COVERS THE CENTER**

On a Try attempt from the 15-yard line, holder A2 is on a knee 8 yards behind the center, and kicker A1 is lined up behind the holder. The ball is snapped directly to the kicker, and he drop kicks the ball between the uprights. B3 was covering the center at the snap.

**Ruling:** One-point Try successful, kickoff A40; or re-Try at the B1 (run or pass), kickoff A35. The restriction for Team B players covering the center applies on drop kicks if there is a normal kicking formation with a holder in place prior to the snap. All Team B fouls on a Try that do not result in a re-Try, offset with a Team A foul, or negate a score are enforced on the ensuing kickoff.

**Note:** The restriction on covering the center keys off the formation, not what ultimately happens on the play.

**A.R. 11.21 2-POINT TRY ATTEMPT—FOUL BY TEAM A WITH A CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

On a Try attempt from the 2-yard line, QBA1's pass is intercepted by B4 in the end zone. B4 returns the ball to the 50. During the Try: (a) Tackle A7 was not on the line of scrimmage at the snap; (b) Center A6 and Back A2 chop blocked B7 prior to the interception; or (c) A5 tripped B4 during the return.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Try no good, kickoff A35. Only personal or unsportsmanlike conduct fouls by Team A prior to a change of possession will bridge to the kickoff.
- (b) Try no good, kickoff A20. The chop block foul is enforced on the kickoff because it is a personal foul.
- (c) Try no good, kickoff A20. All Team A fouls after a change of possession, that are not part of a double or multiple foul, will bridge to the kickoff.

**A.R. 11.22 2-POINT TRY ATTEMPT—FOUL BY TEAM B WITH A CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

On a Try attempt from the 2-yard line, QBA1's pass is intercepted by B4 in the end zone. B4 returns the ball to the 50. During the Try: (a) B5 held receiver A2 prior to the pass; (b) B6 blocked A7 low at the B35 during B4's run; or (c) B2 held A8 at the B35 during B4's run.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Re-Try B1 (run or pass) or B10 (kick).
- (b) Try attempt fails, KO 50.
- (c) Try attempt fails, KO A45.

**Note:** All Team B fouls during a Try that do not result in a re-Try, negate a score by Team B, or offset with a Team A foul will be enforced on the ensuing kickoff.

**A.R. 11.23 2-POINT TRY ATTEMPT—FOULS BY BOTH TEAMS WITH A CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

On a Try attempt from the 2-yard line, QBA1's pass is intercepted by B4 in the end zone. B4 returns the ball to the 50. During the Try: (a) B5 held receiver A2 prior to the pass and A5 blocked B3 low at the B35 during B4's run; or (b) Tackle A7 was not on the line of scrimmage at the snap and B6 blocked A7 low at the B35 during B4's run; or (c) during B4's run, B2 held A8 at the B35 and A1 blocked B9 low at the B30 during B4's run.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Re-Try B2 (run or pass) or B15 (kick). If Team B fouls prior to the initial change of possession, the Try is replayed, regardless of subsequent fouls by either team. In this case, the fouls offset at either Try spot.
- (b) Try no good, KO A35. This is not a 5 vs. 15 as there was a change of possession and neither foul is enforced on the kickoff.
- (c) Try no good, KO A35. Since both teams fouled after the change of possession, the fouls offset and are not enforced on the kickoff.

**Note:** If there is a double foul on a Try, no Team B fouls will be carried over to the kickoff if they are used up to create a re-Try, to negate a score by Team B, or offset with a Team A foul.

**A.R. 11.24 2-POINT TRY ATTEMPT—A FOULS ON SUCCESSFUL TRY—B FOULS ON RE-TRY**

On a 2-point Try from the B2, runner A3 scores, but tackle A8 is called for holding. Team A elects to have the 10-yard penalty enforced from the B15 and attempt a Try kick from the B25. Before the snap for the kick, B3 encroaches.

**Ruling:** Re-Try B20 (kick), kickoff A35; re-Try B7 (run or pass), kickoff A35; re-Try B25 (kick), kickoff A40; or re-Try B12 (run or pass) kickoff A40, Team A always has the option to enforce a Team B foul on the kickoff, or from the previous spot or the other Try spot, the location of which is determined by any previously enforced penalty, if applicable. Team A, after enforcement, can also choose where the ball is spotted between the hash marks.

**A.R. 11.25 TRY KICK ATTEMPT—PASS INTERFERENCE AND FACEMASK**

On a Try kick from the B15, holder A2 muffs the snap at the B23, and kicker A1 recovers at the B25 where he throws a forward pass to eligible receiver A4, who is grabbed and pulled down by the facemask before the ball arrives at the B4. The pass falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** Re-Try B2 (kick) or Re-Try B½ (run/pass). If Team A chooses to again attempt a 1-point Try kick, the pass interference is a spot foul putting the ball at the B4, plus half the distance to the B2 because the pass interference is also a personal foul. If Team A chooses to Try from the “other spot: (run/pass), the enforcement is half the distance to the goal line from the B2, and half the distance again as a result of the personal foul on the pass interference.

**Note:** Team A could also choose to decline the re-Try and enforce the personal foul on the kickoff, but they cannot “split” the personal foul and pass interference and enforce one on the Try and one on the kickoff.

**SAFETY**

**A.R. 11.26 SAFETY—ENTIRE BALL NOT OUT OF END ZONE**

Second-and-10 on A2. Runner A1 is tackled in his end zone with part of the ball on the goal line and part in the field of play.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick A20. The entire ball must be out of the end zone.

**A.R. 11.27 BLOCKED PUNT—TEAM A BATS BALL**

Fourth-and-12 on A14. A’s punt is blocked and the ball rolls to the A4 where A2 bats the ball (a) toward his goal, where A3 falls on the ball in the end zone; or (b) forward where A3 falls on the ball at the A10.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Safety. Safety kick A20. This is a legal bat, and the result of the play is a safety.
- (b) B’s ball, first-and-goal on A5. Illegal bat. B can choose to enforce the foul from the dead ball spot due to A’s foul during a scrimmage kick (resulting in B’s ball at the A5); enforce the foul from the previous spot with a loss of down (resulting in B’s ball at the A7); or decline the foul and accept the result of the play (resulting in B’s ball at the A10).

**A.R. 11.28 FUMBLE IN TEAM B END ZONE—FOUL IN FIELD OF PLAY—TEAM A’S IMPETUS**

Third-and-6 on B22. B2 intercepts a pass in the end zone, and while running in the end zone, fumbles the ball which rolls to the B3. B4 then bats the loose ball forward to the B7-yard line where B5 recovers.

**Ruling:** B’s ball, first-and-10 on B1½.

**Note:** Since Team A’s impetus put the ball in the end zone, the B20 is considered the spot of the fumble. The Team B foul is therefore enforced from the spot of the foul because it’s behind the spot of the fumble. If Team B’s impetus had put the ball in the end zone, the spot of the fumble would be in the end zone, so the result would be a safety.

**A.R. 11.29 SAFETY—PERSONAL FOUL ON PLAY**

On a kickoff from the A35, B2 catches the ball in the end zone and runs to the B4. B2 then fumbles the ball at the B4, and it rolls into the pylon on the goal line. During the fumble, B5 pulled A2 down by the facemask at the B2.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick B10. The result of the play is a safety, so the personal foul is enforced on the safety kick regardless of where the foul occurred (14-4-4).

**A.R. 11.30 SAFETY—B COMMITS PERSONAL FOUL AND BATS BALL INTO TEAM B END ZONE**

Fourth-and-6 on A45. A’s punt is at the B5 when B3 bats the ball backward over the end line, creating new impetus. Immediately after the snap, B3 head slaps A2 on the line of scrimmage.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick B10. A bat (legal or illegal) creates a new impetus, so the result of the play is a safety, and the personal foul carries over to the safety kick.

**Note:** If the foul is committed in an effort to block the kick, it is not a post possession foul, so there is also an option to enforce the foul from the previous spot with an automatic first down, although Team A would likely choose the points and have Team B safety kick from the B10.

**A.R. 11.31 MOMENTUM—ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS—SAFETY**

Third-and-goal on B6. A1 throws to A3 in the end zone near the goal line. B2 intercepts at the B1-yard line with one foot at the B1-yard line and the other on the B½-yard line. His momentum carries him into the end zone where he attempts a backward pass which goes forward. A3 muffs the pass at the B½-yard line, and it falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick B20. Although B2’s momentum took him into his end zone, his foul for an illegal forward pass in the end zone creates a safety.

**A.R. 11.32 SAFETY—NOT MOMENTUM EXCEPTION – FOUL AGAINST AN OFFICIAL**

Third-and 25 on B40. The score is tied 21-21 at the two-minute warning of the fourth quarter. On a long pass thrown toward the goal line, B2 dives in front of receiver A2 and intercepts the ball at the B4. He slides untouched to a stop on the B1, gets to his feet, and to avoid tackler A3, loops into the end zone where he is tackled by A4. The Field

Judge signals safety. B2 is infuriated by the ruling and slams the ball at the official's feet.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick B10. B2's momentum did not take him into the end zone. A second unsportsmanlike conduct foul of this category would lead to disqualification.

**A.R. 11.33 PUNT—TEAM A FOULS IN OWN END ZONE—OPTIONS FOR TEAM B**

Fourth-and-9 on A2. Prior to A1 punting the ball from the end zone, A3 holds B2 on a block initiated in the end zone. The punt is then shanked out of bounds at the A16.

**Ruling:** Safety, safety kick A20 or B's ball, first-and-goal on A8. Team B can accept the option of a safety or enforce the foul from the dead ball spot as a foul during a scrimmage kick.

**A.R. 11.34 NO SAFETY—MOMENTUM EXCEPTION**

Fourth-and-6 on B45. On the last play of the first half, B1 catches a punt on the B2-yard line and the momentum of the kick forces him back into the end zone. B1 is then tackled by A2 in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Half over. The ball would be spotted on the B2-yard line because of the momentum exception; however, time expired on the play.

**A.R. 11.35 SAFETY KICK—OUT OF BOUNDS—POTENTIAL EXTENSION OF PERIOD**

Third-and-8 on A5. Quarterback A1 is sacked in his own end zone. On the ensuing safety kick, A3 punts the ball out of bounds at the B30.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. The penalty for a safety kick kicked out of bounds is 30 yards from the spot of the kick, or the out of bounds spot. If the safety occurred due to a foul by Team A in their own end zone, with no time left in the game, Team B would have the option to extend for an untimed down. If a free kick (including a safety kick) on the last play of a period or the extension of a period, goes out of bounds (untouched or last touched by Team A), Team B has the option to extend for an additional play from scrimmage.

**MOMENTUM EXCEPTION**

**A.R. 11.36 MOMENTUM EXCEPTION—FUMBLE IN END ZONE**

Third-and-6 on B23. A1 throws a pass toward A2 near the goal line. B1 intercepts the ball on the B3-yard line. His momentum carries him into the end zone where he fumbles the ball while being tackled, and: (a) B3 recovers and is downed in the end zone; (b) A3 recovers in the end zone; (c) the ball goes over the end line; or (d) the ball rolls out of bounds at the B4.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. Momentum exception. The ball is dead in the end zone in B's possession.
- (b) Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. There is no momentum exception, because the ball was not dead in the end zone in B's possession.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. Momentum exception. The ball is dead in the end zone in Team B's possession.
- (d) B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. Momentum exception. The fumble forward out of bounds returns to the spot of the fumble, and the ball is then dead in the end zone in Team B's possession.

**A.R. 11.37 MOMENTUM EXCEPTION—TEAM B FOUL DURING FUMBLE IN END ZONE**

Second-and-10 on B20. B1 intercepts A1's pass on the B6, and his momentum takes him into the end zone. While B1 is running in the end zone, he fumbles the ball, and it rolls into the field of play where (a) it is recovered by B2 at the B4; or (b) it rolls out of bounds at the B6. During the loose ball, B3 grabs and twists A2's facemask at the B5.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Safety. Safety kick A20. Momentum does not apply because the ball was not declared dead in the end zone in Team B's possession. This is a foul during a fumble, and the spot of the fumble (the Basic Spot) is in Team B's end zone, so enforcement results in a safety.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B2½. The fumble forward out of bounds, returns the ball to the spot of the fumble in the end zone. The ball is therefore dead in B's possession in the end zone, thus giving B the ball at that spot of interception momentum (B6). B's foul is enforced from the spot of the foul, which is behind the momentum spot.

**A.R. 11.38 MOMENTUM EXCEPTION—FOUL IN FIELD OF PLAY**

First-and-10 on B16. B1 intercepts a pass at the B6, and his momentum carries him into the end zone. While still in the end zone, B1 throws a backward pass to B2, which goes over the end line. During B1's run in the end zone, B4 tripped A3 at the B8.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. Since the ball is dead in Team B's possession in the end zone, the dead ball spot is the momentum spot - the B6. The tripping foul is therefore enforced from the B6, (the dead ball spot), rather than the spot of the foul - the B8.

**A.R. 11.39 MOMENTUM—ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS TEAM B IN OWN END ZONE—INTERCEPTION TEAM A**

First-and-10 on B16. B1 intercepts a pass or recovers a fumble or backward pass by A1 at the B6, and his momentum carries him into the end zone. B1 tries to run the ball out, sees that he will be tackled, and throws an illegal forward pass to B2 which is intercepted by A3 at the B2-yard line and carried into the end zone.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. Decline the foul for illegal forward pass because enforcement would result in a safety.

**A.R. 11.40 MOMENTUM—FUMBLE RECOVERY**

On a kickoff from the A35, B2 returns the ball to the A15-yard line where the ball is punched out of his hands from behind by A1. The ball is scooped up by A1 on the run at the A6, and his momentum carries him forward into his

end zone, where (a) A1 is tackled; or (b) A1 fumbles the ball and B2 recovers it in A's end zone.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on A6. Team A was the defensive team when A1 recovered B2's fumble, so the momentum exception applies.
- (b) Touchdown Team B. Kickoff B35. The ball was not dead in the end zone in A's possession; therefore, there is no momentum exception.

***Note:** Momentum only applies to the team that has just gained possession after a change of possession. In this case, it would be Team A after recovery of a fumble by Team B. Momentum does not apply to a team regaining possession of their own fumble, pass or kick.*

**A.R. 11.41 NOT MOMENTUM—PROGRESS STOPPED**

Third-and-6 on B16. A1 throws a pass toward A3 in the end zone. B2 intercepts the ball with both feet down at the B1-yard line and is driven back into the end zone by A6. B2 fumbles over the end line as he is tackled by A6.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B1. Forward progress at the B1-yard line. For the momentum exception to apply, B2's own momentum must cause him to go into the end zone.

**A.R. 11.42 NOT MOMENTUM—BALL NOT DEAD IN THE END ZONE—FORWARD PROGRESS**

First-and-10 on B16. B1 recovers a fumble by A1 at the B6, and his momentum causes him to slide feet first into the end zone where he is touched down by A2. Both of B1's feet are in the end zone, but the ball is at the B½.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B½. The ball must get into the end zone for the momentum exception to apply. In this case, B1's forward progress is deemed stopped at the B½.

**A.R. 11.43 MOMENTUM—PASS INTERCEPTED AT GOAL LINE**

First-and-10 on B25. A1 throws a pass to end A2 at the B2. B1 intercepts while airborne, and his first foot hits at the B1, then (a) his second foot lands on the goal line with the ball in the field of play at the B½-yard line; (b) his second foot hits at the ½-yard line with the ball over the goal line; or (c) both feet land in the field of play with the ball at the ½-yard line. B continues into the end zone where he is tackled.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback, as the second foot landed in the end zone.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B1. Momentum exception. The key is where the feet are when the pass is intercepted, not the position of the ball in relation to the goal line.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B1. Momentum exception, as both feet landed in the field of play. The ball is never spotted inside the one-yard line on a momentum exception play.

**A.R. 11.44 MOMENTUM—MUFFED PUNT—DEAD BALL FOUL**

Fourth-and-5 on B45. B2 attempts to catch a punt at the B5 but muffs the ball, and it rolls to the B2. B3 recovers at the B2, and his momentum carries him into the end zone, where he is tackled. After the play, B5 taunts A4.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on the B1. Enforce the taunting from the momentum spot, as that is the succeeding spot. Since the punt was muffed, it is still considered a kick and momentum applies. B5 is charged with his first unsportsmanlike conduct foul that would count toward disqualification.

**A.R. 11.45 MOMENTUM—FOUL IN END ZONE DURING RUN**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. B1 fields the punted ball on the B5, and his momentum takes him into the end zone, where he runs to the other side of the end zone in an effort to run the ball out, but he is tackled in the end zone (or the field of play). During the run, B2 blocks A2 in the back, in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Safety B. Safety kick B20. If a team runs with the ball and fouls in its end zone, enforcement of the foul results in a safety.

**A.R. 11.46 MOMENTUM—FOUL IN END ZONE DURING RUN**

Third-and-10 on B40. A1's pass is intercepted by B1 at the B5, and his momentum carries him into the end zone where he falls to the ground and is touched down. While B1's momentum was taking him into the end zone, B3 blocked A3 low in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick B20. Even though his momentum takes him into the end zone, Team B fouled in its own end zone during the run which results in a safety. It would also be a safety if B1 was downed in the field of play (14-4-4).

**A.R. 11.47 NOT MOMENTUM—FUMBLE IN END ZONE—BALL DECLARED DEAD IN FIELD OF PLAY**

Third-and-10 on B40. A1's pass is intercepted by B1 at the B6, and his momentum carries him into the end zone where he scrambles to try and run it out. While he is running in the end zone, B1 fumbles, and the ball rolls out to the B5 where it is recovered by B1. During the fumble, while the ball was rolling in the field of play, B2 holds A2: (a) at the B4; or (b) in the end zone.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Safety. Safety kick B20. Momentum does not apply because the ball was not declared dead in the end zone in Team B's possession.
- (b) Safety. Safety kick B20.

## FIELD GOAL

### A.R. 11.48 MISSED FIELD GOAL—DOWNED OR ADVANCED BY TEAM A

Fourth-and-4 on B36. Team A's field goal attempt from the B44 is partially blocked, and the ball (a) bounces in the end zone and rolls over the end line; (b) hits on the B33 and then bounces to the B37 where Team A recovers and downs it; or (c) hits on the B33 and then bounces back to the B37 where A2 recovers the ball and advances to the B34.

#### Rulings:

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B44.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B37.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B34.

**Note:** If the kick ends behind the line of scrimmage, the option to return to the spot of the kick (or 20) is lost. This includes a play in which the kick has been beyond the line and returns behind it, regardless of whether it was or was not touched beyond the line.

### A.R. 11.49 MISSED FIELD GOAL—TEAM A FOUL

Fourth-and-10 on B24. A1 attempts a field goal from the B32 which is partially blocked and is rolling on the ground at the B8 when it is touched there by B2. It is then recovered by A3 at the B3. During the field goal attempt, A3 stepped on the sideline at the B15 to avoid B7's block (no contact by B) before recovering the ball.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-15 on B29. It is a five-yard penalty for a kicking team player to voluntarily go out of bounds to avoid being blocked during the kick. The only option for enforcing the foul by Team A is the previous spot. If the foul were to be declined, it would be A's ball at the B3.

### A.R. 11.50 MISSED FIELD GOAL – TEAM A FOUL

Fourth-and-7 on B37. Kicker A1 attempts a field goal from the B45. The kick is short and rolls to the B9 where A6, who had stepped on the sideline to avoid a block at the B11 and had reestablished back inbounds at the B9 and muffs the ball at the B9. The ball rolls to the B12 where B8 recovers and downs the ball.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B17 or A's ball, fourth-and-12 on B42. Team B can enforce the penalties for illegal touching or voluntarily going out of bounds by A6 from the dead ball spot because they did not lose possession during the down, or they can choose to enforce one of the fouls from the previous spot. Had Team B not touched the ball, they would also have the option of enforcing the foul from the spot of the kick.

### A.R. 11.51 TEAM A FOUL PRIOR TO / DURING MISSED FIELD GOAL

Fourth-and-10 on B18. A1's field goal attempt from the B26 is short and rolls untouched into the end zone. (a) A3 was illegally in motion when the ball was snapped, or (b) during the kick, A2 grabs and twists the facemask of B1.

#### Rulings:

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B31 or A's ball, fourth-and-15 on B23.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B41, or A's ball, fourth-and-25 on B33. Team B has the option to enforce either foul from the succeeding spot, which is the spot of the kick.

### A.R. 11.52 TEAM A FOUL DURING MISSED FIELD GOAL—RETURNED FOR TOUCHDOWN

Fourth-and-10 on B38. A1 attempts a field goal from the B46 which is short and caught in the end zone by B1. B1 returns the kick for a touchdown. Before the kick, (a) A5 pulled B2 down to the ground by his facemask, or (b) A3 holds B3 at the line of scrimmage before the kick.

#### Rulings:

- (a) Touchdown Team B. The personal foul is enforced on the Try.
- (b) Touchdown Team B. Kickoff B35. Only personal fouls or unsportsmanlike conduct fouls carry over to the Try. The penalty for holding is declined.

### A.R. 11.53 MISSED FIELD GOAL—KICK INSIDE 20

Fourth-and-6 on B11. A field goal attempt from the B19 is wide and goes over the end line.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20.

### A.R. 11.54 MISSED FIELD GOAL—TEAM B TOUCHES IN FIELD OF PLAY

Fourth-and-9 on B39. A1's field goal attempt from the B47 is missed, and the ball is rolling at the B11 where B5 picks it up and returns it to the B18.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B18. When Team B touches the missed field goal in the field of play or the end zone, B loses the right to take the ball at the spot of the kick.

### A.R. 11.55 MISSED FIELD GOAL—SPOT OF KICK OPTION

Fourth-and-10 on B43. A1 attempts a long field goal from the 50, which is shanked and rolls dead at the B2-yard line. B3 is offside on the play.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-5 on B38. If Team A declines the defense offside penalty, Team B will get the ball at the spot of the kick - the 50-yard line - as a result of the missed field goal. If a Team B penalty is declined, that penalty does not affect Team B's option to take the ball at the spot of the kick on a missed field goal.

**Note:** Team B does not have the option to take the ball at the spot of the kick if (1) B touches the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, or (2) the kick ends behind the line, or (3) a Team B foul during the play is accepted.

**A.R. 11.56 MISSED FIELD GOAL—THIRD DOWN—RECOVERED OR GOES OUT OF BOUNDS BEHIND THE LINE**

Third-and-2 on B9. A field goal attempt from the B17 is blocked and: (a) goes out of bounds at the B18; (b) is recovered by A2 at the B15 who runs for a touchdown; (c) is recovered simultaneously by A3 and B3 at the B21; (d) is recovered by A4 at the B19; (e) is recovered and downed by B2 at the B15; (f) goes beyond the line and then returns behind the line, touched or untouched by Team B beyond the line in the field of play, and goes out of bounds at the B16; or (g) goes beyond the line and returns behind the line, untouched by Team B beyond the line, and is recovered by A2 at the B16.

**Rulings**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B18. If a third down scrimmage kick goes out of bounds or is simultaneously recovered, the ball belongs to Team B.
- (b) Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. Since the scrimmage kick was recovered by Team A behind the line of scrimmage, the advance is legal.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B21. If a third down scrimmage kick is simultaneously recovered, the ball belongs to Team B.
- (d) A's ball fourth-and-12 on B19. Since the scrimmage kick was made on third down, Team A keeps possession if they recover the kick behind the line.
- (e) B's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Since the end of the kick was behind the line of scrimmage, Team B does not have the option to take the ball at the spot of the kick.
- (f) B's ball, first-and-10 on B16. Since the kick went beyond the line of scrimmage and ended behind it, Team B does not have the option to take the ball at the spot of the kick.
- (g) A's ball, fourth-and-9 on B16. Since the ball was not touched by Team B beyond the line and was recovered by Team A behind the line, the down counts. Team A retains possession because the kick occurred on third down.

**Note:** Team B does not have the option to take the ball at the spot of the kick if (1) B touches the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, or (2) a Team B foul during the play is accepted, or (3) the kick ends behind the line (including either team recovering the ball behind the line, or the kick going out of bounds behind the line).

**A.R. 11.57 MISSED FIELD GOAL—TOUCHED/UNTOUCHED BY TEAM B BEYOND LINE**

Fourth-and-10 on B34. A field goal attempt is kicked from the B42 and is missed, and (a) the ball is touched by B1 at the B5 and then rolls into the end zone where B2 downs it; or (b) the untouched kick rolls into the end zone where it is downed by B2.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B42. The ball is dead immediately when it hits in the end zone, untouched by Team B in the field of play or the end zone, so it is therefore brought back to the spot of the kick.

**A.R. 11.58 BLOCKED FIELD GOAL—TOUCHED BY B BEYOND LINE AND RETURNS BEHIND LINE—ILLEGAL PASS**

Fourth-and-2 on B6. A field goal attempt from the B14 is partially blocked, hits B1 at the B3, and bounces back to the B8. A1 picks it up and from the B8 throws a forward pass to A2 who scores.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B13. Legal recovery by A1, but this is an illegal forward pass, because B's touching beyond the line causes a change of possession by rule. First down for Team A, and a five-yard penalty from the spot of the pass.

**A.R. 11.59 MISSED FIELD GOAL—KICK IS TOUCHED BY BOTH TEAM A AND TEAM B**

Fourth-and-5 on B35. A1 attempts a field goal from the B43 that is partially blocked at the line of scrimmage. The ball rolls to the B22 where A2 touches it. The ball then touches B3 at the B18 and is finally recovered by A4 at the B15.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B22. B's ball at the spot of A's first touching.

**A.R. 11.60 MISSED FIELD GOAL—TEAM A PERSONAL FOUL DURING THE KICK**

Fourth-and-6 on B17. During a field goal attempt from the B25, A6 and A7 chop block B8 at the line of scrimmage. The kick is blocked and: (a) goes out of bounds at the B22; (b) B2 tries to recover the ball at the B14 but muffs it out of bounds at the B12; (c) rolls to the B5 where A2 downs it there; (d) goes to the B6 where B3 falls on the ball; or (e) is recovered by B4 at the B2 and is advanced to the A35 where he is tackled.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B37. On a missed field goal attempt, a foul by the kicking team is enforced from the succeeding spot when the receiving team is awarded the ball. The succeeding spot is where the kick ends behind the line of scrimmage.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B27. Since Team B touched the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, the succeeding spot is where the ball becomes dead in its possession.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Since the ball was untouched beyond the line of scrimmage by Team B and downed by Team A, the succeeding spot is the spot where the kick was attempted.
- (d) B's ball, first-and-10 on B21. Since Team B downed the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, the succeeding spot is where the ball becomes dead in B's possession.
- (e) B's ball, first-and-10 on A20. Team B can recover and advance the ball because it is a scrimmage kick. The succeeding spot is the end of the run and Team A's foul will be enforced from that spot.

**A.R. 11.61 MISSED FIELD GOAL—TEAM B FOULS AFTER THE KICK**

Fourth-and-4 on B35. A1's field goal attempt from the B43 is partially blocked at the line of scrimmage. The ball rolls



out of bounds at the B15. While the ball was loose, B2 clips at the B12.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B6. This is a post possession foul, because the foul did not occur in an effort to block the kick.

**A.R. 11.62 MISSED FIELD GOAL—DOUBLE FOUL WITH CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-10 on B20. A field goal attempt from the B28 is partially blocked and rolls out of bounds at the B30. Team A (a) had only six men on the line, or (b) committed a foul for unnecessary roughness or unsportsmanlike conduct during the kick. After the kick is out of bounds, B1 clips at the B10.

**Ruling:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B15, or A's ball, fourth-and-10 on B20, replay the down. Double foul with a change of possession.

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B30, or A's ball, fourth-and-10 on B20, replay the down. Double foul with a change of possession. Because Team A's foul was a major foul, it bridges and offsets with the Team B foul at the spot that foul would be enforced if it were the only foul.

**A.R. 11.63 MISSED FIELD GOAL—DOUBLE FOUL WITH CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-5 on B30. A1's field goal attempt from the B38 is blocked behind the line of scrimmage. B3 picks up the loose ball and runs for a touchdown. During B3's run, B4 blocks low at the A15. A2 and A6 committed a chop block at the snap.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A15. Double foul with a change of possession. Team A's personal foul bridges the change of possession and offsets with the Team B foul at the spot it would be enforced if it were the only foul. Team B also would have the option to replay the down, but Team B would never take that option.

**Note:** The Team A foul bridges the change of possession and offsets with the Team B foul but is still considered a double foul with a change of possession. This is an important distinction as compared to a double foul after a change of possession, because all other aspects of a double/with would still be in effect (extension of a period, replay option on a kick play, and automatic replay if Team B foul creates a safety)

**A.R. 11.64 MISSED FIELD GOAL – DOUBLE FOUL AFTER A CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-5 on B30. A1's field goal attempt from the B38 is partially blocked at the line of scrimmage. B3 picks up the loose ball at the B10 and runs to the B30, where A3 pulls him down by the facemask. While the kick was rolling at the B20, B1 clipped A2 at the B15.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B10. This is a double foul after a change of possession since B's foul was a post possession foul during the kick. The fouls offset at the end of the kick since that spot is behind the spot of the foul. On a double after, the ball is placed at the spot Team B's foul be enforced if it were the only foul on the play.

**A.R. 11.65 MISSED FAIR CATCH KICK—TREATED AS A MISSED FIELD GOAL**

After completing a fair catch at the A40, Team B elects the option of a fair catch kick but kicks the ball wide and short, hitting in the end zone and bouncing back and out of bounds at the A2-yard line without touching any player.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A40. A missed fair catch kick is treated the same as a missed field goal. The Referee would wind the clock when the ball is kicked.

**A.R. 11.66 FIELD GOAL GOOD—FOUL BY TEAM B**

Fourth-and-5 on B22. A1's field goal attempt from the B30 is good. On the play, B3 head slaps A2 on the line of scrimmage immediately after the snap, displacing A2, to allow a teammate to shoot through in an attempt to block the kick.

**Ruling:** Option: Award three points and kickoff 50, or A's ball, first-and-10 on B11. The head slap is a foul for unnecessary roughness.

**A.R. 11.67 FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT HITS OFFICIAL**

Fourth-and-5 on B15. A's field goal attempt from the B23 is low and the ball hits the Side Judge prior to going over the upright.

**Ruling:** The field goal is good. Kickoff A35.

**A.R. 11.68 FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT—LAST PLAY OF GAME— (5 VS. 15)—MAJOR FOUL ON TEAM B**

Fourth-and-6 on B22. Team B leads 33-32. A1 attempts a field goal from the B30 that is good. Team A has six men on the line of scrimmage, and B2 head slaps A2 at the line of scrimmage immediately after the snap. Time in the game expires on the play.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B11. Extend for one down; 5 vs. 15 with the major live ball foul by the defense. Had the kick been unsuccessful, there would be a change of possession, thus no 5 vs. 15. The down would be replayed at the previous spot.

**Note:** If B2's foul had been a dead ball penalty after the kick was declared dead, the game would be over with Team B winning 33-32; no enforcement of the penalty and no extension.

**A.R. 11.69 FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT— LAST PLAY OF THE GAME - 5 VS. 15—MAJOR FOUL ON TEAM A**

Fourth-and-5 on B16. Kicker A1 attempts a field goal from the B24 that is good. On the play, A2 leg whips B2 on the line of scrimmage. B3 was offside at the snap. Time in the game expires on the play with Team B leading 21-20.

**Ruling:** No score. Game over (5 vs. 15 with the major foul by the offense) (14-5-1-Exc 1, 4-8-2-h-Exc 2). Had the kick been unsuccessful, there would be a change of possession, thus no 5 vs. 15. The down would be replayed at the previous spot.

**A.R. 11.70 FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT—DROP KICK—ON OR BEHIND THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE**

Fourth-and-Seven on B10. Team A trails 23-20 and lines up for a field goal from the B18 with 0:42 remaining in the game. Holder A2 muffs the snap and Kicker A1 recovers the ball at the B16 and runs to the B10 where he drop kicks the ball through the uprights with 0:35 remaining. The ball is dropped just inside the B10, but part of A1's body is still on or behind the B10.

**Ruling:** Field goal good. Kickoff A35. (On a scrimmage kick, the kicker's entire body and ball must be beyond the line of scrimmage for this to be illegal).

**TOUCHBACK**

**A.R. 11.71 TOUCHBACK—KICKOFF—FUMBLE OVER END LINE**

On a kickoff, B1 catches the ball in the end zone, and while running there, he fumbles the ball over the end line.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. The impetus is from the kick.

**A.R. 11.72 TOUCHBACK—PUNT—TEAM A DOES NOT REESTABLISH IN FIELD OF PLAY**

Fourth-and-4 on A45. A1 punts the ball which bounces on the B2. Kicking-team member A3 goes into the end zone and jumps from the end zone and controls the ball while airborne and lands on the B1-yard line.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Touchback. To prevent a touchback, the kicking team member must re-establish himself in the field of play prior to touching the ball. The play is dead as soon as he touches the ball.

**A.R. 11.73 TOUCHBACK AND PERSONAL FOUL—IMPETUS BY TEAM B**

Third-and-8 on A5. A1 takes the snap and hands the ball forward to back A2 at the A4. A2 muffs the handoff, accidentally kicks the ball, and the ball rolls toward the sideline where it comes to a stop at the A4. B2 attempts to scoop the ball, but instead muffs it into A's end zone. A4 recovers and is tackled in the end zone by his facemask.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A35. Touchback. Because the ball was at rest, Team B's impetus put the ball in the end zone, and the personal foul is enforced from the 20-yard line. The personal foul could also be enforced from the previous spot if that was more advantageous for Team A.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**A.R. 11.74 MUFFED SNAP ON FIELD GOAL—INTENTIONAL GROUNDING OR NOT**

Third-and-10 on B15. With 15 seconds remaining in the game, Team A lines up to attempt a game-winning field goal from the B23. Holder A2 muffs the snap, picks the ball up off the ground, and realizes that the field goal attempt would now be blocked. Therefore, while still on his knees at the B22, A2: (a) shovels the ball toward his wingback where it hits the ground behind the wingback who is not looking; or (b) spikes the ball into the ground directly in front of him. There were 11 seconds on the clock when the pass hit the ground.

**Rulings:**

(a) Fourth-and-10 on B15. Incomplete pass. No foul.

(b) Fourth-and-20 on B25. Intentional grounding. Run 10 seconds, if Team B chooses, in which case the game clock starts on the ready for play signal.

**A.R. 11.75 FAIR CATCH KICK GOOD—ILLEGAL FORMATION BY KICKING TEAM**

On a fair catch kick from the A40, Team B (kicking team) does not have two players outside the numbers on either side of the formation as the kick is made. The kick is good and (a) there is time remaining on the clock or (b) time in the half expires on the play.

**Rulings:**

(a) Fair catch kick from A45; replay the kick after enforcement of the five-yard penalty for the illegal formation. Although not a free kick, the rules for an **onside kick** formation apply. On the replay, Team A could also run a play from scrimmage instead of attempting another fair catch kick.

(b) There is no extension of the half, and the score does not count since this is an offensive foul. **Had the field goal been unsuccessful, the foul could be enforced from the succeeding spot and the half extended.**

**A.R. 11.76 HOLDER BRINGS A TOWEL ONTO THE FIELD PRIOR TO SETTING UP FOR TRY**

On a Try attempt from the 15-yard line, holder A2 brings out a large white towel and wipes his hands before calling for the snap. After he wipes his hands, the holder (a) throws the towel away and behind where he is kneeling or (b) drops the towel directly in front of him. The snap is made, and the kick is good.

**Ruling:** (a) and (b) Try is good, kickoff A35. The holder is allowed to bring a towel out to the field that measures 6" by 8" and should be tucked into his waistband after use. The holder will be warned that, if on a subsequent field goal or Try attempt he doesn't tuck the towel into his waistband, there will be a 5-yard penalty.

## RULE 12 PLAYER CONDUCT

### USE OF HANDS, ARMS, AND BODY

#### A.R. 12.1 INTERLOCKING INTERFERENCE

Fourth-and-10 on B20. On a successful field goal attempt from the B28, guard A1 and tackle A2 grasp one another's arms to prevent rushing defenders from blocking the successful kick.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-20 on the B30. Ten-yard penalty for interlocking interference upon contact with the opponent(s) (12-1-4-b).

#### A.R. 12.2 USE OF HANDS DURING LOOSE BALL—PERSONAL ATTEMPT TO RECOVER

Second-and-5 on 50. Runner A1 goes to the B40 where he fumbles. A2, in an attempt to recover the ball: (a) pushes B2 in the back; or (b) grabs B2 from behind and pulls him out of the way at the B40. A2 recovers the ball at the B38.

**Rulings:** In both (a) and (b), A's ball, first-and-10 on B38. Legal play, since A2 is making a personal attempt to recover a loose ball which he is eligible to touch.

#### A.R. 12.3 USE OF HANDS—KICKING TEAM—PUNT

Fourth-and-10 on 50. A2, flanked wide on a punt, is double teamed by B1 and B2 as he moves five yards downfield. A2 pulls B2 out of the way at the B40, runs downfield, and makes the tackle on the punt return man B3 at B10. B3 fumbles and A3 recovers and is downed at the B15.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 at B15. A kicking team player may use his hands or arms to ward off, or push/pull an opponent attempting to block him, but he may not pull the opponent to slingshot himself downfield.

#### A.R. 12.4 HANDS TO THE FACE—DEFENSE—CLOSE-LINE PLAY

Second-and-10 on B40. A1's pass falls incomplete. During the pass rush, B1 puts his hand on blocker A2's facemask and pushes A2's head back. (a) A2's head is pushed halfway back with force, and B1 maintains that position without immediately releasing the head; or (b) A2's head is pushed back slightly without force and B1's hand slides off the mask with little delay; or (c) B1 pins A2's head all the way back but does not maintain the position for any length of time.

**Rulings:**

(a) First-and-10 on B35. Illegal hands to the face.

(b) Third-and-10 on B40. No foul.

(c) First-and-10 on B35. Illegal hands to the face.

**Note:** If the contact is direct and forcible, it is a foul, even without pinning the head back for a period of time. This standard applies to both offensive and defensive players.

#### A.R. 12.5 HANDS TO THE FACE—DEFENSE AGAINST WIDE RECEIVER

Second-and-10 on B40. B2 is playing wide receiver A2 tight at the line of scrimmage and immediately following the snap: (a) B2 puts his hand on A2's facemask and pushes A2's head back, but immediately releases it; or (b) B2 delivers a blow to A2's facemask or helmet with an open hand. A1's pass is incomplete.

**Rulings:**

(a) First-and-10 on B35. Illegal hands to the face by B2 against the wide receiver. This is a foul regardless of whether the play is a run or a pass. This same action by a defensive/offensive lineman against an opponent would not be a foul in close-line play.

(b) First-and-10 on B25. Unnecessary roughness.

#### A.R. 12.6 DEFENSIVE HOLDING—PULL-AND-SHOOT

Fourth-and-7 on B16. At the snap, B1 grabs Tackle A5 at the line of scrimmage and pulls him back to the B14. This allows B2 to shoot the gap in an attempt to block Kicker A1's field goal attempt from the B24. However, (a) B2 stops at the line of scrimmage and does not continue through the opening; or (b) B2 is blocked at the line scrimmage by the wingback who slides over to block him. The field goal is good.

**Rulings:**

(a) Field goal is good. Kickoff A35. There is no foul for "pull-and-shoot" if no one attempts to "shoot."

(b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B11, or field goal good, kickoff A35. Defensive holding is called even if the "shooter" is blocked by someone else. On a field goal, there is no option for Team A to take the score and enforce the 5-yard penalty on the kickoff, as there would be on a Try.

#### A.R. 12.7 DEFENSIVE HOLDING—NOT TRIPPING

Second-and-9 on B45. A1 runs to the B41 where he is tackled. During the run, B2 reaches out and grabs blocker A2 by the ankle at the B43, causing A2 to go down.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B36. This is defensive holding not tripping.

#### A.R. 12.8 BLOCK IN THE BACK—INTO THE TACKLE

Fourth-and-10 on A40. A1's punt is fielded by B1 at the B10. During the return, B2 pushes A2 squarely in the back at the B15 but the push actually pushes A2 into B1 at the B12 where he makes the tackle.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B6. This is a foul for a block in the back.

#### A.R. 12.9 PASS BLOCKING—BLOCK IN THE BACK

Second-and-10 on B40. As quarterback A1 is in the pocket, lineman A2 is attempting to block defensive end B2. B2 gets completely past A2, and (a) A2; or (b) A3 (another lineman) pushes B2 directly in the back, pushing him past

A1. A1 then completes the pass for a touchdown.

**Rulings:** In both (a) and (b): Touchdown. This is a legal block because the contact occurred while the quarterback was still in the pocket.

**A.R. 12.10 PASS BLOCKING—QB OUT OF THE POCKET—BLOCK IN THE BACK**

Second-and-10 on B40. After quarterback A1 has scrambled out of the pocket, lineman A2 loses contact with defensive end B2. B2 has an unrestricted path to A1, but A2 pushes B2 directly in the back, causing him to miss the tackle. A1 passes to A2 for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Second-and-20 on 50. The illegal block in the back should be called because the quarterback was, (or had been), out of the pocket.

**A.R. 12.11 BLOCK IN THE BACK—PUNT IN THE AIR—TEAM A OR B**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. While A1's punt is in the air: (a) B1 blocks flyer A2 in the back at the B18 and then B1 fair catches the punt at the B12; (b) B1 blocks flyer A2 in the back at the B18 and then the untouched punt rolls into the end zone; or (c) A3 blocks B4 in the back at the B40, after which the untouched punt rolls into the end zone.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B6. Post possession enforcement (12-1-3-b).

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B9. Since the ball is still alive at the time of the block, this is post-possession enforcement from the spot of the foul, which is behind the end of the kick (B20).

(c) Fourth-and-20 on A40 or B's ball, first-and-10 on B30.

**A.R. 12.12 OFFENSIVE HOLDING AT TIME OF TACKLE**

As B1 is returning the opening kickoff, (a) B2 holds A2 as A2 is making the tackle at the B30; or (b) B2 holds A2 at the B30, five yards away from the runner, as B1 is being tackled by A3 at the B35.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. No foul. Offensive Holding will not be called if the runner is being simultaneously tackled by any defensive player.

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. No foul.

**A.R. 12.13 TRIPPING OR LEG WHIP**

Second-and-10 on B40. As QBA1 drops back to pass, blocker A2 is beaten by B2 on the pass rush. A2 falls to the ground and (a) throws his leg out (no whipping motion); or (b) whips his leg around in an attempt to keep B2 from sacking the quarterback. A2's leg makes contact with B2 either above or below the knees. A1 runs to the B15.

**Rulings:**

(a) Second-and-25 on A45. Tripping (12-2-14).

(b) Second-and-25 on A45. Unnecessary roughness (leg whip). In both situations, if there is a whipping motion, it is a personal foul for a leg whip, regardless of where the contact occurs.

**A.R. 12.14 ILLEGALLY KICKING/BATTING THE BALL—POTENTIAL RUNOFF AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Third-and-5 at B40. There is 1:35 remaining in the fourth quarter, and Team B is ahead in the score, 22-20. QBA1 muffs a hand-to-hand snap, and while the ball is loose on the ground (a) at the B41, or (b) at the B38, A1 deliberately kicks or bats it out of bounds at the B34.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) Fourth-and-15 on 50. This is a foul during a backward pass, so the enforcement spot is the spot of the backward pass. Since that spot is behind the line of scrimmage, the foul is enforced from the previous spot, with a loss of down. There is no option for a 10 second runoff for this backward pass out of bounds because there is another foul on the play.

**Note:** If the foul for illegal kicking or batting occurs beyond the line of scrimmage on a scrimmage kick play, the foul is enforced as a foul on a scrimmage kick play, and there is no loss of down.

**ROUGHING/RUNNING INTO THE KICKER**

**A.R. 12.15 RUNNING/NOT RUNNING INTO KICKER—BALL TOUCHED BY B**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. Team B puts a strong rush on the punter, and after B4 deflects the kick: (a) he runs into the kicker; or (b) B5 runs into the kicker. The punt goes out of bounds at the B6.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B6. No foul.

(b) Fourth-and-5 on A45 or B's ball, first-and-10 on B6 (decline). Since B5 did not touch the punt, he cannot run into or rough the kicker.

**A.R. 12.16 RUNNING INTO OR ROUGHING THE KICKER**

Fourth-and 6 on A45. A1 punts the ball which goes out of bounds at the B10. B1, attempting to block the punt: (a) brushes A1 with his right shoulder, but A1 remains upright; (b) hits A1's kicking leg while it is extended, knocking A1 to the ground; (c) slides into A1's plant leg, knocking him to the ground; (d) hits A1's plant leg directly, knocking A1 to the ground; or (e) collides with A1 in the inner-thigh area or torso of his body, knocking A1 to the ground.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B10. No foul. There is no foul if the contact with the kicker is incidental and minimal.

(b) Fourth-and-1 on 50, or B's ball first-and-10 on B10. Running into the kicker.

(c) A's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Roughing the kicker.

(d) A's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Roughing the kicker.

(e) A's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Roughing the kicker.

**A.R. 12.17 RUNNING/ROUGHING/UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS—BALL SKIPS OFF GROUND**

Fourth-and-3 on A45. The snap to punter A1 is low and skips off the ground once, but is fielded cleanly by A1, and A1 is able to begin his normal punting motion. (a) B2 runs into A1 (not roughing); (b) B2 collides with A2 squarely in the torso (normally enough for roughing); or (c) B2 throws a forearm into A2's helmet. B2 does not block the punt. The punt is shanked out of bounds on the B45.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. No foul for running into the kicker since the snap hit the ground (12-2-12).
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. No foul for roughing the kicker since the snap hit the ground (12-2-12).
- (c) A's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Unnecessary roughness. If the snap touches the ground, only unnecessary roughness protection applies, and if the contact is unnecessary roughness, it is a foul whether or not B2 touches the punt.

**A.R. 12.18 CONTACT WITH KICKER—SECOND FOOT JUST HITS GROUND**

Fourth-and-10 on B30. Field goal kicker A1 kicks the ball at the B38 and his second foot just comes down to the ground when: (a) B1 slides into A1 taking his feet out from under him and causing A1 to go to the ground; or (b) B1 bumps A1 on his feet causing A1 to stumble. The field goal is no good.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Roughing the Kicker. (Running into the kicker is not an option when the second foot has come back to the ground. If the contact is significant, this is roughing the kicker.)
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B38 (the spot of the kick). No foul. Once the second foot has come back to the ground the only potential fouls are roughing the kicker or unnecessary roughness.

**A.R. 12.19 ROUGHING/NOT ROUGHING THE HOLDER**

Fourth-and-12 on B30. B2 leaves his feet in an attempt to block A1's field goal attempt from the B38. He misses the kick and: (a) lands in front of holder A2 and slides into him knocking him off his knees and to the ground; or (b) makes slight contact with A2 and does not knock him over. The field goal is good.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Field goal good, kickoff 50 or first-and-10 on B15 (take points off board). Roughing the holder.
- (b) Field goal good, kickoff A35. No foul. There is no foul for running into the holder. Roughing is the only option against the holder.

**ROUGHING THE PASSER**

The following mechanics and interpretations pertain to quarterback protection:

- (1) When a quarterback runs an option and keeps the ball, he is a runner. He has none of the special protections given to a passer. Normal unnecessary roughness rules apply. It does not matter whether he is in or outside the pocket area. If the quarterback on an option pitches the ball to a player, his only protection before or after the pitch is that provided under normal unnecessary roughness rules. He does not receive any of the special protections granted to a player who throws a forward pass while on the run. The player who receives the pitch does not have any special "defenseless player" protection.
- (2) When the passer goes outside the pocket area and either continues moving with the ball (without attempting to advance the ball as a runner) or throws while on the run, he loses the protection of the one-step rule and the protection against a low hit, but retains the other special protections afforded to a passer in the pocket. If a quarterback attempts to advance the ball as a runner, he loses all of the special protections of the roughing the passer rule. However, if he throws while on the run, he regains all the special protections except the one-step rule and low hit rule. If he stops behind the line and clearly establishes a passing posture, he is covered by all of the special protections for passers.
- (3) When a quarterback retreats to pass but brings the ball down and begins to advance as a runner, he no longer has roughing the passer protection, even when his path of advance is within the pocket.
- (4) When a quarterback retreats to pass and moves in an attempt to avoid the pass rush, even if he is moving forward in the pocket, he has roughing the passer protection until he clearly becomes a runner.
- (5) When a quarterback hands off to a teammate and carries out his fake, his only protection is normal unnecessary roughness rules. Helmet-to-helmet contact is not necessarily illegal.
- (6) If a defensive player is blocked or fouled into the quarterback and violates any of the roughing the passer rules, it is not a foul unless the contact is avoidable. This is the same standard that applies for low hits.

**A.R. 12.20 ROUGHING THE PASSER**

Second-and-10 on B35. Quarterback A1 rolls out of the pocket, and while moving, completes a pass to A2 who runs out of bounds at the B12. Just after A1 released the ball, B1 launches and hits A1 in the chest area with the hairline part of the helmet and then continues to rip up and contact A1 under the chin with his helmet.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-goal on B6. Roughing the passer.

**A.R. 12.21 ROUGHING THE PASSER**

Third-and-5 on 50. Quarterback A1, in the pocket, throws a pass to A2, who runs for a touchdown. Just after A1 released the ball, B1 lowers his head and hits A1 with the hairline part of his helmet in the chest area.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A, enforce the roughing the passer foul on the Try.

**A.R. 12.22 ROUGHING/NOT ROUGHING THE PASSER (NO PASS THROWN)**

Second-and-10 on B35. Quarterback A1 drops back to pass, and while he is standing in the pocket at the B46, B1 tackles him from behind by (a) driving the crown of his helmet into the back of A1; (b) contacting A1's head with his forearm; (c) forcibly tackling A1 below the knees; or (d) diving and landing on the ground while swiping with his arm

and catching A1 around the calf. A1 lands on the ground at the B45.

**Rulings:**

- (a), (b), and (c): First-and-10 on B20. Roughing the passer (12-2-11).
- (d) Third-and-20 on B45. No foul. Not forcible contact in the knee area or below.

**A.R. 12.23 ROUGHING THE PASSER—FUMBLE RECOVERED BY DEFENSE**

Second-and-2 on B35. Quarterback A1 drops back to pass. B1 tackles him from behind by driving his lowered head into the back of A1, contacting A1's head with his forearm, or tackling A1 below the knees at the B44. As A1 is hit, the ball leaves A1's hand at the B45. The Referee correctly rules fumble. B2 recovers the ball at the B47.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B20. The quarterback was in a passing posture, so in each instance it is a foul for roughing the passer.

**A.R. 12.24 ROUGHING THE PASSER—ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS**

Second-and-10 at the 50. A1 scrambles, runs to the B49, retreats to the A45, and then passes the ball to A2 at the B40. After the ball has left A1's hand, B1 takes two steps and hits Quarterback A1 facemask-to-facemask as he tackles him.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on 50. Roughing the passer and illegal forward pass This is not a 5 vs. 15 because the illegal forward pass foul carries a loss of down penalty, so the fouls offset at the previous spot. Roughing the passer rules apply on all legal and illegal forward passes thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

**A.R. 12.25 ACTION AGAINST QUARTERBACK WHEN PASS IS THROWN FROM BEYOND LINE**

Second-and-10 on A20. Quarterback A1 drops back to pass but is chased out of the pocket and scrambles. At the A21, believing he is still behind the line, A1 throws a pass to A2 who catches the ball and goes out of bounds at the A35. Just as A1 releases the pass: (a) B2 hits him helmet to helmet in an attempt to tackle him; (b) B2's arm hits A1's helmet as B2 tries to tackle him; (c) B2 clubs A1 in the head as he attempts to make the tackle; or (d) B2 tackles A1 below the knees.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-10 on A20. Replay the down. This is unnecessary roughness and an illegal forward pass, but it is not a 5 vs. 15, because the illegal forward pass beyond the line is not a simple 5.
- (b) Third-and-14 on A16. This is not a foul by B2, because the passer is beyond the line. The illegal forward pass is enforced from the spot of the foul with a loss of down.
- (c) Second-and-10 on A20. Replay the down. The unnecessary roughness and illegal forward pass offset. (Not a 5 vs. 15).
- (d) Third-and-14 on A16. This is not a foul by B2, because the passer is beyond the line. The illegal forward pass is enforced from the spot of the foul with a loss of down.

**A.R. 12.26 TACKLING QUARTERBACK AT OR BELOW THE KNEES—SWIPE VERSUS WRAP**

Second-and-10 on A40. QBA1 drops back in the pocket to pass. As B1 is rushing quarterback A1, he is blocked and falls to the ground. B1 stays on the ground and crawls toward A1, and while still on the ground, tackles A1 at or below the knees at the A30 by: (a) reaching out with one hand and swiping A1's legs out from under him; or (b) by reaching out and forcibly wrapping his arm around A1's leg.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Third-and-20 on A30. No foul.
- (b) First-and-10 on B45. Roughing the passer.

**A.R. 12.27 NOT ROUGHING THE PASSER—EXTENDING ARMS**

Second-and-10 on A40. B1 is rushing quarterback A1, and after A1 has released the pass, B1, who is within one step of A1, pushes A1 to the ground. The pass falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on A40. No foul. If the action is late and clearly part of a second act after the pass is released, it is a foul for roughing the passer.

**A.R. 12.28 ROUGHING THE PASSER—QUARTERBACK DUCKS**

Second-and-10 on A20. A1 drops back to pass, and as he is about to be sacked in the pocket, he ducks his head to avoid contact. Just as he ducks his head, B1, who is attempting to tackle him, forcibly hits A1: (a) helmet-to-helmet; or (b) in the helmet with his right arm and takes him to the ground at the A15.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) First-and-10 on A35. Roughing the passer. The onus is on the defender to avoid forcible contact to the head of the quarterback.

**A.R. 12.29 NOT ROUGHING THE PASSER—QUARTERBACK IS OUT OF THE POCKET**

First-and-10 on A20. Quarterback A1 rolls out of the pocket, and while moving, throws an incomplete pass. Defender B1 takes two steps after A1 released the ball and then tackles A1.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on A20. Not roughing the passer as the one-step rule is not in effect when the quarterback is out of the pocket unless the quarterback stops and sets up again in a passing position.

**A.R. 12.30 ROUGHING THE PASSER—LANDING ON QB WITH ALL OF DEFENDER'S BODY WEIGHT**

First-and-10 on A30. QBA1 throws a pass from the pocket that falls incomplete, and B1 tackles him within one step after the ball is released. B1: (a) makes a normal tackling motion without lifting or driving the QB into the ground, but lands on him with his entire body weight or (b) lifts and slams the QB down but gets his body to the side of the QB.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b): First-and-10 on A45. Roughing the passer. The defender is prohibited from landing on the QB

with all or most of his body weight, even during a normal tackle. The defender is also prohibited from lifting and driving the QB into the ground as he is making the tackle, even if he gets to the side of the QB when they land on the ground.

## **BLOCKS (PERSONAL FOULS)**

### **A.R. 12.31 CLIPPING IN CLOSE-LINE PLAY**

First-and-10 on B40. Back A2 runs left and right tackle A5 blocks B5 below the waist (above the knees) from behind at the line of scrimmage. B5 was lined up opposite the offensive center A6. A2 runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-25 on A45. Clipping by A5, since B5 was lined up more than one position removed and was responding to the flow of the ball away from A5.

### **A.R. 12.32 CLIPPING IN CLOSE-LINE PLAY—AT OR BELOW KNEES**

First-and-10 on A40. On a running play, left guard A1 at the A42 hits nose tackle B2 below the knees from behind. This action occurs as B2 is in pursuit of the runner. The runner is downed at the A47.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-23 on A27. Clipping. If A1's block was above the knee would be a legal clip in this situation.

### **A.R. 12.33 CLIPPING IN CLOSE-LINE PLAY—ROLL UP BLOCK**

Second-and-3 on B48. Right guard A3 hits nose tackle B3 below the waist from behind as B3 is in pursuit of the runner at the B49. A3 then rolls up on the back or side of the legs of B3.

**Ruling:** A's ball, second-and-18 on A37. The initial block is legal, but the rolling-up action causes this to become a foul for unnecessary roughness.

### **A.R. 12.34 CLIPPING BY OFFENSIVE BACK**

Second-and-4 on B14. QBA1 hands off to Back A2 at the B16. A2 runs around the right side to the B9. After the snap, left wing back A3, (who was not flexed), blocks B4 from behind, below the waist but above the knees, at the B16, behind the original position of the left guard.

**Ruling:** Second-and-19 on B29. Clipping. Blocking below the waist from behind is only legal (subject to specific limitations) in close-line play by offensive linemen.

### **A.R. 12.35 CRACKBACK—PLAYER IN MOTION—NOT FLEXED AT THE SNAP**

Third-and-5 on A40. Slot-back A2, lined up on the right side of the formation, goes in motion toward the ball, and at the snap, is behind the normal position of the right tight end. A2 blocks B3 below the waist at the A43. A2 runs out of bounds at the A46.

**Ruling:** Third-and-17 on A28. Illegal crackback block. A man in motion is not permitted to crackback, even if he is not flexed at the snap.

### **A.R. 12.36 CRACKBACK—LOCATION OF BLOCK**

First-and-10 on A30. Quarterback A1 runs to the A35 where he is downed. After the snap, wide receiver A3, who was lined up six yards outside his tackle at the snap, came back in toward the ball and blocked B1 below the waist: (a) at the A26; (b) at the A34; (c) at the A23; or (d) at the A33 beyond the original position of the ball.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-25 on A15. Illegal crackback.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-21 on A19. Illegal crackback.
- (c) A's ball, first-and-25 on A15. Illegal block below the waist because the block occurs outside the tight end box.
- (d) A's ball, second-and-5 on A35. This is not an illegal crackback block, because the blocker was moving away from the original position of the ball when the block occurred.

### **A.R. 12.37 CRACKBACK—PLAYER ORIGINALLY NOT FLEXED**

Second-and-7 on A39. Quarterback A1 hands off to A3 who runs right and hands off to A4 who runs wide around left end to the B40. Following the hand off, quarterback A1 becomes a lead blocker, turns the corner, (more than 2 yards outside the original position of the left tackle), and comes back toward where the ball was snapped, and blocks tackle B7 low at the A40.

**Ruling:** Second-and-21 on A25. Illegal crackback block. This would also be an illegal block below the waist if the block was outside the tight end box. The tight end box does not disappear when the ball leaves the box.

### **A.R. 12.38 CRACKBACK—TIGHT END/WINGBACK—FLEXED/NOT FLEXED**

Third-and-8 on 50. Prior to runner A2 sweeping around right end to the B40, A3, who is lined up on the right side of the formation, dives back in toward the ball and blocks B1 below the waist at the 50. At the snap, A3 was located (a) at tight end or wing back with his inside foot 1½ yards outside the right tackle's outside foot; (b) at tight end or wing back with his inside foot 2 yards outside the right tackle's outside foot; (c) at tight end or wing back with his inside foot 2½ yards outside the right tackle's outside foot; or (d) at tight end with his inside foot 2 yards outside the right tackle's outside foot, but after the snap, he moves 3 yards outside and then blocks back toward the ball; or (e) at wing back with his inside foot 2 yards outside the right tackle's outside foot, but after the snap, he moves three yards outside and then blocks back toward the ball.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) First-and-10 on B40. Legal block. Not flexed.
- (b) First-and-10 on B40. Legal block. Not flexed.
- (c) Third-and-23 on A35. Illegal crackback.
- (d) First-and-10 on B40. Legal block. On the line of scrimmage and not flexed at the snap.
- (e) Third-and-23 on A35. Illegal crackback, as A3 was in a backfield position at the snap.



#### **A.R. 12.39 CRACKBACK BLOCK**

Third-and-5 on 50. A2 is lined up wide to the right on the line of scrimmage. A3 sweeps wide around the right side and runs out of bounds at the B40. During the run, blocker A2 comes back toward the center of the field from the 50-yard line, and blocks defensive end B1 (a) low at the B46; (b) low at the B44; (c) with force to the head or neck area at the B46, with his forearm, shoulder, or head (without lowering his head); (d) with force to the head or neck area at the B44, with his forearm, shoulder, or head (without lowering his head); or (e) with force to the rib area at the A44 with his forearm, shoulder, or head (without lowering his head).

##### **Rulings:**

- (a) Third-and-16 on A39. Illegal crackback block (low) in the five-yard belt.
- (b) Third-and-14 on A41. Illegal block below the waist outside of the tight end box.
- (c) Third-and-16 on A39. Illegal crackback block (high) in the five-yard belt.
- (d) First-and-10 on B40. Legal block, as it occurred more than 5 yards from the line of scrimmage in the direction of Team B's end line.
- (e) Third-and-20 on A35. Blindside block. Although this action is not an illegal crackback, because it is not within the five-yard belt, it is parallel or back toward the blocker's end line, so it is a blindside block.

**Note:** *If a defender is in a position that protects him from an illegal crackback block, he is protected from blocks below the waist, as well as forcible hits to the head or neck area by the defender, or hits to the body by the defender with his head.*

#### **A.R. 12.40 ILLEGAL CRACKBACK BLOCK**

Third-and-10 on 50. A1 drops back to pass, but cannot find an open receiver, so he scrambles around the right side and out of bounds at the B40. Tailback A2 had gone to the right for a swing pass, and as A1 scrambles to the right, A2 comes back toward the middle of the field from the 50 and (a) blocks B1 low at the B46 behind the original position of the tight end, or (b) blocks B1 to the head with the blocker's head (not lowered), shoulder, or forearm at the B46.

##### **Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, third-and-21 on A39. Illegal crackback block.
- (b) A's ball, third-and-21 on A39. Illegal crackback block.

#### **A.R. 12.41 BLINDSIDE BLOCK / LEGAL BLOCK**

A1's punt is caught by B1 at the B20. B1 loops around toward the sideline, as A2 takes a pursuit angle to try and cut B1 off. B2 is blocking for B1 and angles from the B35 to the B30, where he makes forcible contact with A2. (a) B2 contacts A2's head with his head, shoulder or forearm; (b) B2 contacts A2's shoulder or any part of his torso (above the waist) with B2's head, shoulder or forearm; (c) B2 pushes A2's body or shoulder with his hands, not contacting A2 with B2's body; or (d) B2 steps in front of A2, screening him from getting to B1. B1 is tackled at the B40.

##### **Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Blindside block.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Blindside block.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Legal block.
- (d) B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Legal block.

**Note:** *It is a foul if a player initiates a block when his path is toward or parallel to his own end line and makes forcible contact to his opponent with his helmet, forearm, or shoulder.*

#### **A.R. 12.42 BLINDSIDE BLOCK— LEGAL / ILLEGAL BLOCK**

Second-and-5 on A30. A2 takes a handoff from a T-Formation Quarterback or in shotgun position and runs off right tackle to the A35. Left tackle A3 pulls and crosses to the right side of the formation, moving at an angle that is parallel to the line of scrimmage and kicks out left defensive tackle B2 while B2 is behind (a) the normal right tackle position, or (b) the normal right tight end position. The block is to the body of B2, (below the neck and head area), with A3's head (not UOH), shoulder, or forearm.

##### **Rulings:**

- (a) First-and-10 on A35. Legal block because it occurred in the area defined by close-line play.
- (b) Second-and-20 on A15. Blindside block because the block occurred outside the area defined by close-line play.

**Note:** *It is not a foul for a blindside block if the forcible contact occurs in "close-line play" prior to the ball leaving that area. The ball is not considered to have left that area if the player who takes the snap, either from a shotgun position or from under center as a T-Formation Quarterback, retreats in the pocket immediately or with a slight delay, and hands the ball to another player, or runs with the ball himself. This exception does not apply to any action other than a designed play. Any forcible contact in "close-line play" is still subject to the restrictions for crackback and peel back blocks.*

#### **A.R. 12.43 BLINDSIDE BLOCK—BALL IN / OUT OF CLOSE-LINE PLAY**

Second-and-10 on 50. QBA1 hands off to A2 who runs off right tackle to the B25. Immediately after the snap, receiver A3, who was on the line of scrimmage and split 5 yards outside the right tackle at the snap, comes back toward the ball and blocks nose guard B1 who had crossed the line of scrimmage and was at the A48 behind the original position of the offensive right guard. The block is with force, shoulder to shoulder. (a) A1 was a T-quarterback, or (b) A1 was in shotgun at the snap, 5 yards behind the line.

**Ruling:** In (a) and (b): First-and-10 on B25. Legal block because the block occurred in close-line play before the ball left that area. The ball is not considered to have left that area due to a shotgun snap, so long as the ensuing action is a designed run play.

**A.R. 12.44 BLINDSIDE BLOCK / LEGAL BLOCK**

Second-and-5 on A30. A2 takes a handoff from a shotgun or T-Formation Quarterback and starts to sweep around the right end. As he is (a) behind the normal position of the right tackle, or (b) behind the normal position of the tight end, he stops and changes direction toward the middle of the field. Left tackle A3 sees A2 change direction, runs toward him, and forcibly blocks defensive end B2 at the A28 in the chest with his head (not UOH), forearm, or shoulder. The block occurs behind the normal right guard position and is parallel to the line of scrimmage. A2 runs to the 50, where he is tackled.

**Rulings:**

- (a) First-and-10 on the 50. This is a legal block, as it occurred within close-line play before the ball left that area.
- (b) Second-and-20 on A15. Blindside block. Although this block occurs within close-line play, the block occurred after the ball left that area.

**Note:** Once the ball leaves close-line play, the area disappears and a block that satisfies the requirements of a blindside block is illegal even if the ball re-enters that area.

**A.R. 12.45 LOW BLOCK IN THE PROCESS OF TACKLING/FAILING TO TACKLE RUNNER**

Third-and-10 on B20. B1 intercepts A1's pass on the B10 and returns it with blockers B2 and B3 directly in front of B1. During the return, at the B40, A1 dives low in an attempt to tackle B1, and in the process: (a) goes through B2 below the waist before making the tackle at the B40; or (b) misses the tackle and then makes contact with B7 below the waist. B1 runs out of bounds at the 50.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Illegal low block.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. No foul.

**Note:** If A1 is attempting to make the tackle, he cannot go low through an opponent to get to the ball carrier. If, after attempting to make a tackle, he accidentally makes contact with an opponent below the waist, it is not a foul for an illegal low block.

**A.R. 12.46 LOW BLOCK TEAM B—PUNT**

Fourth-and-2 on A45. Team A lines up in a punt formation. At the snap, flyer A4 is blocked below the waist from the front by B4 at the 50. B1 fair catches the punt at the B14.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B7. Illegal low block by B4. The restriction on Team B begins at the snap. This is a post-possession foul because it happened during the scrimmage kick play.

**A.R. 12.47 LOW BLOCK TEAM A—PUNT**

Fourth-and-2 on A45. Team A lines up in a punt formation. Right guard A7 blocks B4 low (a) immediately after the snap, or (b) after the punt. B1 fair catches the punt at the B14.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B14. No foul. Team A's restriction against blocking low begins after the punt and the low block occurs inside the tight end box.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B29 or A's ball, fourth-and-17 on A30. Illegal low block after the punt.

**Note:** The restriction against blocking below the waist during a down in which there is a punt, begins after the snap for Team B, but not until after the punt for Team A.

**A.R. 12.48 LOW BLOCK TEAM B—BLOCKED PUNT**

Fourth-and-5 on 50. B1 blocks the punt which goes to the A34 where A2 attempts to recover. B2 blocks A2 below the waist from the side at the A32 just prior to B1 recovering the ball and running to the A15, where he is downed.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Blocking below the waist is prohibited by the receiving team during a down in which there is a kick or change of possession. This is not a post-possession foul, because the kick did not cross the line of scrimmage, so enforcement is from the previous spot with an automatic first down.

**A.R. 12.49 PUNT—TEAM B PUSHING TEAMMATE INTO OPPONENT**

Fourth-and-20 on 50. Team A lines up in a punt formation. At the snap, B1 and B2 push down-lineman B3 into the center in an attempt to block the punt. A2's punt goes out of bounds at the B15.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Team B cannot push a teammate into the offensive formation during a down in which there is a scrimmage kick formation, and it is a foul whether there is a kick or not. This is not a post-possession foul, because it is an attempt to block the kick, so enforcement is from the previous spot with an automatic first down.

**A.R. 12.50 LOW BLOCK TEAM B—FREE KICK**

A1 kicks off from the A35. During the return, B2 contacts A3 below the waist at the knees at the B30. The kickoff is returned to the 50. (a) B2 slips and falls causing him to contact A3 below the waist; (b) B2 is pushed by teammate B4, causing B2 to contact A3 below the waist; (c) B2 intentionally dives at A3's knees, but A3 gets his hands on B2 just before the contact; or (d) B2 intentionally blocks A3 at the knees.

**Rulings:**

- (a) First-and-10 on 50. No foul.
- (b) First-and-10 on 50. No foul.
- (c) First-and-10 on B15. Illegal low block.
- (d) First-and-10 on B15. Illegal low block.

**A.R. 12.51 PERSONAL FOUL TEAM B—FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT**

Fourth-and-18 on B38. Team A attempts a field goal from the B45 that is blocked and remains behind the line of scrimmage. As A4 attempts to recover the ball, B2 grabs and pulls A2's facemask at the B38. B3 falls on the loose ball at the B40.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B23. Since the kick did not cross the line, it is not a post possession foul. The facemask penalty is enforced from the previous spot and is an automatic first down. If the kick had crossed and rebounded behind the line, it would be a post possession foul, and Team B would keep the ball after enforcement of its foul from the spot of the foul or the end of the kick.

**A.R. 12.52 LOW BLOCK TEAM B—FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT**

Fourth-and-9 on B35. On an attempted field goal kicked from the B43, B2, who is lined up opposite guard A6, blocks A6 low at the knees immediately after the snap. The kick is wide to the right.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Team B fouls that occur immediately after the snap on field goal attempts are considered to have happened in an attempt to block the kick and are not treated as post-possession fouls; they are therefore enforced from the previous spot. On scrimmage kick plays, Team B players cannot block below the waist from the time of the snap until the end of the down; Team A players cannot block below the waist from the time of the kick until the end of the down.

**A.R. 12.53 LOW BLOCK TEAM B—FIELD GOAL FORMATION—KICK IS NOT MADE**

Fourth-and-4 on B23. Holder A2 muffs the snap and attempts to run for a first down. He is tackled at the B20. At the snap, B4 blocked guard A6 below the waist.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. This block is legal since there was no kick made during the down.

**A.R. 12.54 LOW BLOCK—DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Third-and-2 on A45. B5 intercepts a pass at the B10 and runs to the B20 where he fumbles. A3 recovers and runs the ball into the end zone for a touchdown. A4 blocked B5 below the waist from the front at the B10 during A3's run.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B25. Neither team may block below the waist after a change of possession.

**A.R. 12.55 LOW BLOCK—TEAM A—OUTSIDE THE TIGHT END BOX—PASS**

Second-and-10 on B45. Wide receiver A4 is flexed four yards outside tackle A5, and slot back A2 is positioned one yard to the inside of A4. Following the snap and prior to the pass, A4 hesitates as slot back A2 fires out and blocks cornerback B2 who is pressing A4. The block, which is below the waist and away from the ball, springs A4 on an inside slant route. A4 catches the pass and scores.

**Ruling:** A's ball, second-and-25 on A40. Illegal block below the waist because the low block occurs outside the tight end box. This would also be offensive pass interference by A2 if the contact occurred more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage.

**A.R. 12.56 CHOP BLOCK—LURE ON RUN, PASS, KICK**

Second-and-10 on B40. At the snap, right tackle A2 retreats a step and sets up to block B2, who is across from him. As B2 starts forward, right guard A3 blocks B2 below the waist. A2 never makes contact with B2. This occurs (a) on a pass play, (b) on a running play, or (c) on a kick play. Team A gains a first down on the play.

**Rulings:** (a), (b), (c): Second-and-25 on A45. Anytime an offensive player sets up to block in a fashion that "lures" the defender, it is a chop block when another offensive player then immediately blocks that defender below the waist. This applies to all type plays - run, pass, or kick.

**A.R. 12.57 CHOP BLOCK ON QUICK KICK**

Third-and-35 on A10. The ball is snapped thru T-Formation Quarterback A1's legs to tailback A2 who punts the ball, which rolls dead at the 50. Immediately after the snap, left tackle A3 and fullback A2 chop block B1 who is attempting to get to A2.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A35. A chop block is illegal anywhere on the field on any type of play. (Team B also has the option to enforce the foul from the previous spot with the down repeated, although that choice would be unlikely).

**A.R. 12.58 CHOP BLOCK—RUN**

Third-and-5 on A30. Quarterback A1 hands off to running back A2 who runs wide around right end to the 50. Center A5 posts up nose guard B1 at the line of scrimmage, and lineman A6 chops B1 in the area of the thigh or lower. Lineman A6's original position is: (a) left guard; (b) left tackle; or (c) right tackle.

**Rulings:** (a), (b), and (c) A's ball, third-and-20 on A15. Illegal chop block. All chop blocks are illegal anywhere on the field on any type of play.

**A.R. 12.59 PEEL BACK BLOCK**

Second-and-10 on A30. As A2 takes a handoff and runs around the right end to the A40: (a) guard A3 or; (b) tight end A6 "peels back" toward his own end zone and blocks B2 on the side below the waist at the A35.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) A's ball, second-and-20 on A20. No offensive player, regardless of where he is aligned at the snap, may block a defensive player below the waist from the side while moving toward the blocker's end line. If the block occurred outside the tight end box, this would also be an illegal block below the waist.

**Note:** If the blocker can get his near shoulder completely across the front of both of the defender's legs, it is not a peel back block, but would still be an illegal block below the waist if the block occurs outside the tight end box.

## **DEFENSELESS PLAYER**

### **A.R. 12.60 HITTING DEFENSELESS PLAYER - LAUNCH**

Second-and-5 on 50. Quarterback A1 throws a pass to A2 at the B40. A2 leaps for the pass, and it goes off his hands incomplete. As A2 is airborne, B2 launches and hits A2 in the chest: (a) with any part of his helmet after lowering his head or (b) with his head up, so that his facemask hits A2's chest.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Contact with any part of the helmet when a defender lowers his head prior to contact is a foul, regardless of the launch.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Unnecessary roughness. If B2 launches, contact with any part of the helmet, including the facemask, is a foul.

### **A.R. 12.61 HITTING DEFENSELESS PLAYER—PASS COMPLETE/INCOMPLETE**

Second-and-5 on 50. Quarterback A1 throws a pass to A2 at the B40. A2 leaps for the pass, and while he is defenseless, B2 lowers his head and hits A2 in the chest, shoulder pads, or head with his helmet, or in the head with his forearm, and: (a) the pass falls incomplete; or (b) A2 hangs on to the pass and is tackled at the B38.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on B35.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B23. Hitting a defenseless player with the any part of the helmet after lowering his head prior to contact or hitting a defenseless player's head or neck area with the forearm, is a foul regardless of whether the pass is complete.

### **A.R. 12.62 HITTING DEFENSELESS PLAYER—LEGAL/ILLEGAL HITS**

Second-and-11 on 50. Quarterback A1 throws a pass to A2 at the B40. A2 leaps for the pass, B2 hits A2, and A2 goes to the ground at the B40 and hangs on to the ball.

- (a) B2 hit A2 in the head with: any part of his helmet, facemask to facemask, his shoulder, or his forearm;
- (b) B2 lowers his head prior to contact and hit A2 in the chest with any part of his helmet;
- (c) B2 hit A2 in the chest with his facemask (face up).

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) First-and-10 on B25. Hit against a defenseless player.
- (b) First-and-10 on B25. Hit against a defenseless player.
- (c) Third-and-1 no B40. Legal hit—not to the head or neck area, and the defender did not lower his head.

### **A.R. 12.63 HIT ON DEFENSELESS INELIGIBLE RECEIVER—ILLEGAL FORMATION**

Second-and-10 on B45. Tight end A2 is "covered" on the line of scrimmage by wideout A3. A2 goes downfield and attempts to catch a pass. A2 is in a defenseless posture at the B25 when B1 lowers his head and hits him with any part of his helmet to any part of A2's body. The pass falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B30. Ineligible receivers are given the same protection against illegal hits on defenseless receivers as is given to eligible receivers. (This is also an illegal formation and ineligible man downfield by the offense, resulting in a 5 vs. 15 enforcement).

### **A.R. 12.64 HIT TO HEAD OF ELIGIBLE RECEIVER WITHIN LEGAL CHUCK ZONE**

Second-and-10 on B30. Flexed receiver A2 is running a crossing pattern at the B27 when linebacker B3, who is at the B26, makes helmet-to-helmet contact with A2 knocking him down. A1's pass is incomplete.

**Ruling:** A first-and-10 on B15. Unnecessary roughness. A receiver running a route gets defenseless player protection and may not be contacted in the head, from the side or behind, even within the legal five-yard chuck zone.

### **A.R. 12.65 HITTING DEFENSELESS PLAYER—SNAPPER ON FIELD GOAL OR TRY**

Fourth-and-5 on B18. Kicker A1's field goal attempt from the B26 is wide right. At the snap, B1 who was lined up over guard A6, (a) made contact with the outside shoulder of snapper A2 as he tried to rush the kick; or (b) takes a direct line and drives his shoulder into the neck of the snapper while his head was down.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B26. No foul.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B9. Unnecessary roughness, the snapper on a scrimmage kick attempt is a defenseless player until he has an opportunity to defend himself or moves downfield.

### **A.R. 12.66 HITTING DEFENSELESS PLAYER—KICK RETURNER**

Fourth-and-10 on A30. Punt returner B6 does not give a fair catch signal and moves to catch kicker A1's punt at the B45.

- (a) Just as B6 catches the ball, A3 hits him in the helmet with his shoulder. B6 maintains the ball as he goes to the ground.
- (b) B6 controls the kick but, before he can take a step, A3 lowers his helmet and hits B6 in the ribs with the hairline of his helmet. B6 loses control of the ball, which is recovered by A4 at the B40.
- (c) B6 muffs the ball into the air at chest level and, as he attempts to gain to possession A3 hits him with a forearm to the neck area and the ball bounces to the 50 where it is recovered by A4.
- (d) B6 muffs the ball 3 yards to his right where it hits the ground. Just after the muff, A3 hits B6 in the helmet with his shoulder. The ball is recovered by A4 at the 50.
- (e) Just as B6 catches the ball, A3 hits him in the helmet with his shoulder. B6 maintains control of the ball and runs to the 50, where he is tackled.
- (f) As soon as B6 touches the ball, A2 tackles him around the hips, which causes B6 to muff the ball. A4 recovers the ball at the B45.

**Rulings:**

- (a)-(d) B's ball, first-and-10 on A40. Unnecessary roughness. A kickoff or punt returner attempting to field a kick in the air is a defenseless player regardless of whether he gives a fair catch signal. The penalty is enforced from the spot of the foul and Team B retains possession.
- (e) B's ball, first-and-10 on A35. The penalty for unnecessary roughness can be enforced from the dead ball spot because Team B had possession at the end of the down and there were no other fouls; see 14-2-4.
- (f) A's ball first-and-10 on B45. A punt returner who does not signal for a fair catch may be contacted as soon as he touches the punt, as long as the contact is legal.

**DELIVERING BLOW AFTER LOWERING HEAD—RUNNER/TACKLER/BLOCKER**

**A.R. 12.67 NOT HIT ON DEFENSELESS PLAYER—BOTH PLAYERS PLAYING BALL**

Second-and-10 on B20. Team A trails 28-24 with five seconds remaining in the game. Quarterback A1 throws a pass to A2 in the end zone. As the ball approaches A2, B2 makes a break on the ball. Both A2 and B2 collide as they jump, shoulder to shoulder, while both are making a play on the ball, and there is helmet contact by (a) B2 with his shoulder and (b) both players. Both players had an equal opportunity to get to the ball. The pass falls incomplete. Time expires on the play.

**Ruling:** Game over. This is not a foul for a hit on a defenseless player in both (a) and (b), since both players were making a play on the ball, had equal position, and any helmet contact is deemed incidental.

**A.R. 12.68 MAKING FORCIBLE CONTACT AFTER LOWERING HEAD**

Second-and-5 on 50. A2 runs either inside or outside of the tackles to the (a) B48; or (b) B40; where he lowers his head and makes forcible contact hitting B2 in the helmet or his body.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-18 on A37.
- (b) Second-and-10 on A45. No player may lower his head and make forcible contact with an opponent anywhere on the body and anywhere on the field (12-2-10).

**A.R. 12.69 DEFENDER LOWERS HEAD AND FORCIBLY CONTACTS RUNNER**

First-and-Goal on B10. A2 runs around right end and angles toward the goal line pylon. B3, also coming from an angle, lowers his head and makes forcible contact with his helmet knocking A2 out of bounds at the B4.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-goal on B2. Regardless of the path taken by the defender, he is not permitted to lower his head and make forcible contact to any part of a runner's head or body anywhere on the field.

**A.R. 12.70 TACKLE LOWERS HEAD WHILE BLOCKING AND FORCIBLY CONTACTS DEFENDER**

First-and-10 on B20. After the snap, left tackle A3 lowers his head and makes forcible contact with the rushing DE B3 in his (a) helmet or (b) his chest. QBA1's pass is incomplete.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) First-and-25 on B35 or second-and-10 on B20. No player is permitted to lower his helmet and make forcible contact with an opponent.

**A.R. 12.71 CORNERBACK LOWERS HEAD AND FORCIBLY HITS RECEIVER IN THE SHOULDER IN COVERAGE**

First-and-10 on 50. Receiver A4 comes off the line running a deep pattern. Cornerback B2, in press coverage, lowers his head and makes forcible contact with his helmet against the shoulder of A4 at the B46. A4 catches a pass and is tackled at the B30.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B15. No player is permitted to lower his helmet and make forcible contact with an opponent.

**A.R. 12.72 IMPERMISSIBLE USE OF THE HELMET – LOWERING THE HEAD**

First-and-10 on A20. A1 hands the ball to A2 who runs around the right end. B1 lowers his head and makes forcible contact against A2 in the torso, and A2 is tackled at the A25.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on A40. Impermissible Use of the Helmet foul by B1.

**A.R. 12.73 IMPERMISSIBLE USE OF THE HELMET – FORCIBLE CONTACT TO OPPONENT'S HEAD OR NECK AREA**

Third-and-5 on A35. A1 hands the ball to A2 who runs around the right end and down the sidelines. B1 keeps his head up but makes forcible helmet to helmet contact against A2, who is tackled at the A45.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B40. Impermissible Use of the Helmet foul by B1.

**A.R. 12.74 IMPERMISSIBLE USE OF THE HELMET – FIRST POINT OF CONTACT**

First-and-10 on A20. A1 hands the ball to A2, who runs around the left end. B1 makes forcible contact against A2 by first hitting A2's right shoulder with his forearm, followed immediately by forcible contact by B2's helmet to the helmet of A2. A2 goes to the ground at the A40.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B45. Impermissible Use of the Helmet foul by B2. The forcible contact by B2 is still a foul even though his forearm was the first body part to contact A2, followed immediately by his forcible helmet contact to the head of A2.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**A.R. 12.75 HEAD SLAP**

Third-and-6 on 50. Quarterback A1 throws a pass to end A2, and the pass falls incomplete at the B40. B2 head slaps A3 at the A48 prior to the pass.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Personal foul by B2; penalize from the previous spot.

- A.R. 12.76 RUNNER GRABS AND CONTROLS DEFENDER'S FACEMASK-DEFENDER GRABS RUNNER'S FACEMASK**  
First-and-10 on A45. Quarterback A1 hands off to A2, who runs around right end to the B30. During the advance, A2 grabs defender B1 by the facemask at the B35, wrapping his fingers around the mask, and (a) twists it; or (b) controls the tackler's head, but releases it before he turns or twists the facemask. B1 also grabs, but immediately releases A2's facemask at the B30 during the tackle (no pull, twist, or control).  
**Rulings:**  
(a) First-and-5 on 50. Enforcement is from the spot of the foul.  
(b) First-and-5 on 50. A2 controlled B1's mask, so it is a foul. B1 immediately released A2's mask without controlling it, so there is no foul.
- A.R. 12.77 FACEMASK—NO CONTROL OR TWIST OF MASK**  
Second-and-10 on A35. A1 runs to the A44 where B1 tackles him, and in the process, grabs and immediately releases A1's facemask (no twist, turn, control or pull). As A1 was running through the line, left guard A2 grabbed the mask of defender B2 as he was blocking him, but immediately released it, and did not push B2's head back.  
**Ruling:** Third-and-1 on A44. No foul for facemask or illegal hands to the face.
- A.R. 12.78 HORSE COLLAR—QUARTERBACK—IN OR OUT OF POCKET**  
Second-and-10 on B40. As quarterback A1 starts to scramble, B1 pulls A1 down from behind by grabbing the inside collar of the back of the shoulder pads or jersey, inside the collar of the side of the shoulder pads or jersey, or grabbing the jersey at the nameplate or above, and pulls A1 to the ground at the B45. When this occurs, (a) A1 is still in the pocket; or (b) A1 is outside the pocket.  
**Rulings:**  
(a) A's ball, third-and-15 on B45. No foul, as the quarterback (or runner) was still in the pocket (or close-line play).  
(b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B25. It is not necessary for the runner to go to the ground for it to be a foul. If the runner's knees buckle due to the action it is a foul.
- A.R. 12.79 HORSE COLLAR—NO IMMEDIATE TAKEDOWN OF RUNNER—FUMBLE**  
First-and-10 on A30. A2 breaks through the line and is at the B30 when B1 catches him from behind, grabs the back collar of A2's shoulder pads, or the jersey at the nameplate or above and pulls him back and to the ground at the B24. However, before A2 hits the ground, he fumbles at the B22, and B1 recovers at the B20.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 at B11. It is a personal foul regardless of whether B1 pulled A2 down immediately after grabbing the collar. This is a foul once the runner is beyond the area defined by close-line play. Since Team B recovered the ball, the foul is enforced from the spot of the fumble.
- A.R. 12.80 HORSE COLLAR—DIRECTION RUNNER IS TAKEN TO THE GROUND**  
Second-and-10 on B40. A2 takes a handoff and runs around left end toward the sideline. B1 grabs the inside of A2's shoulder pad opening (or the inside of his jersey) on the side or back and pulls A2 to the ground, twisting around in front of A2 so that A2 goes to the ground face first at the B35.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Horse-collar tackle. The direction that the runner is pulled down is irrelevant.
- A.R. 12.81 CONTACT WITH SLIDING PLAYER WHO IS GIVING HIMSELF UP**  
Second-and-10 on A30. QBA1 scrambles to the A35 where he slides feet first after B1 has already committed himself to making contact. As A1 is going to the ground to give himself up: (a) B1 makes contact with the side of his helmet to A1's chest; or (b) B1 makes contact to A1's head with his helmet, shoulder or forearm.  
**Rulings:**  
(a) Third-and-5 on A35. No foul.  
(b) A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. A sliding player (feet first or not) cannot be hit in the head by the defender's helmet, shoulder or forearm, even if the slide begins after contact is imminent.
- Note:** The ball is spotted where it was when the runner's first body part, other than a hand or foot, touches the ground.
- AR. 12.82 PLAYER INTENTIONALLY SLIDING OR DIVING TO GROUND IN ATTEMPT TO GAIN YARDAGE**  
Third-and 10 on A20. QBA1 scrambles to the A27 where he is confronted by converging B players, so he dives for the first down. The ball is at the A29 when A1's knee hits the ground, but A1 continues to slide on the ground, untouched by Team B, until the ball reaches the A31.  
**Ruling:** Fourth-and-1 on A29. Even though a player may be attempting to gain additional yardage when he dives forward, he is intentionally going to the ground and therefore considered to be giving himself up. He is therefore down when a body part other than a hand or foot touches the ground. The ball is spotted where it was when the first body part contacted the ground.
- A.R. 12.83 PLAYER WHO IS INTENTIONALLY GOING TO GROUND—CONTACT BY DEFENSIVE PLAYER**  
Third-and-5 on B45. QBA1 scrambles, and at the B43, dives in an effort to make the first down. B1 has already committed himself to tackle A1 when A1 starts to dive. B1 contacts A1 in the helmet with the forearm while A1 is still in the air. A1's knee then first hits the ground while the ball is at the B44.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B29. Personal foul by B1, hitting a defenseless player. A player who is intentionally going to the ground is a defenseless player, and the opponent must make reasonable efforts to avoid hitting him, and under no circumstances can he hit him in the head with his head, shoulder or forearm, nor can he hit him anywhere in the body with the crown of his helmet.

## UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

### A.R. 12.84 THROWING HELMET—NOT DIRECTED AT OPPONENT OR OFFICIAL

Third-and-3 on B40. B3 is unhappy with the Line Judge because he thinks he was held as A3 ran a sweep around end and was finally downed at the B35. B3 argues with the Line Judge and then throws his helmet down in disgust as he is walking back toward his bench.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B20. Unsportsmanlike conduct. B3 is not disqualified for this action, and it does not count toward disqualification because his action was not directed toward an opponent or an official. If he had thrown his helmet down in the vicinity of an opponent or an official, the foul would count toward disqualification. In either case, this is a foul between downs.

### A.R. 12.85 THROWING HELMET—PERSONAL FOUL—DISQUALIFICATION

Third-and-10 on B40. A2 does not like the way he was tackled by B4 at the B32, so he throws his helmet at B4.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-17 on B47. Personal foul by A2 plus an automatic disqualification for throwing his helmet at opponent.

### A.R. 12.86 TAUNTING—BY RUNNER PRIOR TO SCORE

Second-and-10 on A20. A1 breaks free and is running for a touchdown ahead of all Team B players by 10 yards. When A1 gets to the B15, he turns around and holds the ball out at the trailing Team B players as A1 continues backward into the end zone.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. The penalty for taunting will be enforced on the Try. Taunting fouls, whether during the play or after the dead ball, are treated as dead ball fouls. Two violations of 12-3-1 (a) through (c) in the same game results in an automatic disqualification.

### A.R. 12.87 REMOVING HELMET DURING PLAY

Third-and-10 on B20. With Team B ahead and the ball snapped with three seconds remaining in the game, B1 believes he has sacked QBA1 at the B35. Thinking the game is over, B1 takes his helmet off to celebrate in front of the Referee. The pass was complete to A2 who was tackled at the B10. Time expired during the play.

**Ruling:** Game over. Removing a helmet is treated as a dead ball foul. If the score had been tied, or this was the end of the first half, the unsportsmanlike conduct foul would be enforced against Team B on the kickoff to start overtime or the second half. (12-3-1-Penalty Enforcement) This foul does not count toward a potential disqualification.

### A.R. 12.88 TAUNTING—KICKOFF

On the opening kickoff, receiver B1 catches the ball deep in the end zone and downs the ball. A3, A4 and A5 encircle B1 and use taunting acts (pointing and dancing) and abusive language.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Taunting. These are unsportsmanlike conduct fouls against A3, A4, and A5 that count toward disqualification for each of them, although only one of them is enforced. Two violations of 12-3-1 (a) through (c) in the game results in an automatic disqualification.

### A.R. 12.89 THROWING PUNCH/KICK WITHOUT MAKING CONTACT

Third-and-10 on B25. Runner A2 is tackled by B3 at the B16 and thinks B3 grabbed his facemask. A2 jumps up and: (a) swings at B3's head, but misses; or (b) kicks at his leg without making contact.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) Fourth-and-16 on B31 Since there was no contact, this is unsportsmanlike conduct (12-3-1-a), not unnecessary roughness. This unsportsmanlike conduct foul against by A2 counts toward disqualification. Two violations of 12-3-1 (a) through (c) in the game results in an automatic disqualification.

### A.R. 12.90 TAUNTING/UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT—GESTURES

Second-and-15 on A20. Quarterback A1 is sacked on the A15 by B1. After the tackle, B1 does "six-shooters" or gives a "throat-slash" signal directed at: (a) A1; or (b) no one in particular.

**Rulings:**

(a) A's ball, first-and-10 on A30 (taunting). Two violations of 12-3-1 (a) through (c) in the game by the same player would result in his disqualification.

(b) A's ball, first-and-10 on A30 (unsportsmanlike conduct). The use of any act that depicts violence or use of a weapon is always unsportsmanlike conduct. Since this foul is not directed at a player, official, or team personnel, it is not of the type that could lead to disqualification for a second such foul.

### A.R. 12.91 FIELD GOAL FORMATION—LEVERAGE—JUMPING BETWEEN OFFENSIVE LINEMEN

Fourth-and-6 on B22. During a field goal attempt, B2 places one hand on the snapper and one on the right guard and pushes off to jump through the gap between the guard and center. He lands in the offensive backfield and then jumps up in an attempt to block the kick. (a) B2 blocks the kick and recovers it at the B30, or (b) the holder sees B2 and realizes the kick will be blocked, so he scrambles with the ball to the B20.

**Rulings:**

(a) First-and-10 on B11. Leverage. If the field goal had been successful, A would also have the option of accepting the points and kicking off from the 50.

(b) A's ball, first-and-goal on B10. Because this was an apparent field goal attempt, it is a foul for leverage. There does not have to be a kick for leaping and leverage fouls to be called. Here, it is enforced from the dead ball spot as a foul on a running play.



**A.R. 12.92 FIELD GOAL FORMATION—LEVERAGE—ATTEMPT TO GAIN HEIGHT**

Fourth-and-10 on B25. During an unsuccessful field goal attempt from the B33 that goes out of the end zone, B2: (a) steps with a foot or knee on the back of A5 as he tries to rush the kicker, but B2 does not reach up with a hand to attempt to block the kick; or (b) while B2 has his foot/knee on A5's back and is rushing the kicker, B2 also raises a hand up to try and block the kick.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B12½. Leverage. It is illegal for a defensive player to jump or step on a Team B player in an effort to block a kick or apparent kick, even without extending a hand.

**A.R. 12.93 LEVERAGE OR LEAPING—PUNT/FIELD GOAL/TRY—NO KICK**

Fourth-and-10 on B40. With Team A in a scrimmage kick formation at the snap (for a field goal, Try, or punt), B2 commits any act that would be considered leverage or leaping. Punter/Holder/Kicker A2, (a) muffs the snap and falls on the ball at the B45, (b) stands up and throws an incomplete pass, (c) rolls to his right where he is tackled at the B35, or (d) stands up and completes a pass to A7, who is tackled at the B32.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on B25. The 15-yard penalty is enforced from the previous spot.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B25. The 15-yard penalty is enforced from the previous spot.
- (c) A's ball, first-and-10 on B20. The 15-yard penalty is enforced from dead ball spot as a foul on a running play.
- (d) A's ball, first-and-10 on B17. The 15-yard penalty is enforced from the dead ball spot as a foul on a passing play.

**Note:** *There does not need to be a kick for a leverage or leaping foul, as long as the requirements of the foul are met, and Team A is in a scrimmage kick formation at the snap.*

**A.R. 12.94 LEAPING—UNSUCCESSFUL FIELD GOAL—PLAYER ON / OFF LINE**

Fourth-and-5 on B20. Team A's field goal attempt from the B28 fails. Defensive player B1 lines up: (a) four yards from the line of scrimmage; or (b) more than one yard behind the defensive line, but with his foot parallel to the back foot of a down linemen on the line of scrimmage. He runs forward, leaps in an attempt to block the kick, and crosses the line of scrimmage or lands on a member of the kicking team or his teammate.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-goal on B10. Unsportsmanlike conduct, leaping.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-goal on B10. Unsportsmanlike conduct, leaping. A player who is more than one yard off the line of scrimmage is prohibited from leaping in an attempt to block a kick or apparent kick, regardless of the location of his feet relative to other defenders on the line of scrimmage. The leaping is illegal if he crosses the line of scrimmage or lands on another player.

**Note:** *There does not need to be a kick for a leverage or leaping foul, as long as the requirements of the foul are met, and Team A is in a scrimmage kick formation at the snap.*

**A.R. 12.95 LEAPING—TRY—DEFENSIVE PLAYER JUMPS OVER DOWN LINEMEN**

On a Try from the B15, defensive player B1 runs forward four yards and jumps over the center (or through a gap) in an attempt to block the kick, and he (a) blocks the kick which rolls out of bounds at the B14, or (b) misses the ball and the kick is good.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Re-Try B7½ by kick or attempt a 2-point attempt from the B1. Team A can also decline the re-Try and choose to kickoff from the 50.
- (b) Try is good, kickoff 50; or attempt a 2-point attempt from the B1. It is illegal for a defensive player who was not lined up and stationary on the line of scrimmage prior to the snap to jump over linemen or through a gap in an attempt to block a Try or field goal.

**A.R. 12.96 NO SUBSTITUTION - OFFENSIVE PLAYER NEAR SIDELINE—NOT IN BENCH AREA**

Third-and-15 on B20. Team A breaks the huddle with 11 players on the field, but they act as though they have 12 men on the field. QBA1 excitedly motions A11 to get off the field quickly. A11 runs off towards his bench pretending to leave the game, however, he stops one yard from the sideline in the backfield at the B21. No defensive player covers him. The ball is snapped and A11 catches a pass for a touchdown. Team A did not substitute on the play.

**Ruling:** Touchdown A, kickoff A35. If Team A did not substitute on the play, and at the snap Team A players are in legal positions, including A11 lined up outside his team's bench area, this action is not a foul.

**A.R.12.97 SUBSTITUTION TO DECEIVE—OFFENSIVE PLAYER NEAR SIDELINE—NOT IN BENCH AREA**

Fourth-and-10 on B25. After the prior play, the offense runs off the field, and the apparent field goal team, including the kicker, run on. As they approach the line of scrimmage (after all 11 kicking team players had moved inside the numbers) to set in a field goal formation, kicker A1 suddenly starts waving at A88 to get off the field, yelling that he's not supposed to be out there. A88 quickly runs off, but he stops short of the sideline and gets set on the line of scrimmage, where he is uncovered by the defense. The ball is snapped to A1 who throws a touchdown pass to A88.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-25 on B40. Unsportsmanlike conduct. This is a foul at the snap and enforced as a live ball foul. Any time a team uses a substitution or apparent substitution in an attempt to confuse the opponent, it is a foul for unsportsmanlike conduct. This is a foul inside or outside the bench area, and whether or not A88 is covered. However, if Team A had not substituted, this would be legal, because A88 was not lined up in his bench area. There is no foul if either team calls a timeout.

**A.R. 12.98 HIDEOUT—IN BENCH AREA**

Third-and-6 on B45. Split receiver A2, who was in on the previous play, lines up in front of his bench area at the B45, two yards from the sideline in an attempt to be on the field unnoticed. Team A snaps the ball and throws a quick pass to A2 who runs for a touchdown, as no defensive player saw him in front of the bench area. Team A did not substitute on the play.

**Ruling:** Third-and-21 on A40. Illegal hideout because A2 lined up inside his team's bench area. This is a foul at the snap and enforced as a live ball foul. This is a foul whether or not A2 is covered. It doesn't matter whether Team A substituted on the play because substitution is not an element of this foul. The spot where A2 lines up determines whether this action is illegal, not the spot from where the ball is snapped. There is no foul if either team calls a timeout.

**A.R. 12.99 GOALTENDING**

Fourth-and-10 on B30. On an attempted field goal by A2 from the B38, B3 stands under the goal post and jumps above the crossbar and deflects (or catches) the kick so that it does not cross the crossbar. The attempt would have been successful.

**Ruling:** Option for Team A: Three points awarded to Team A and Kickoff A35; or first-and-10 on B15. Palpably unfair act. (12-3-1-s, 12-3-4)

**Note:** *If the field goal had been successful despite B3's action, it is still a foul if B3 touched the ball; the field goal would count, and A would kick off from the 50, or Team A could elect to take the points off the board, and it would be A 1-10-B15. If there was no contact with the ball, it is not a foul.*

**A.R. 12.100 PLAYER REMOVING HIS HELMET**

Third-and-10 on B20. A2 runs for a touchdown, and after scoring, removes his helmet: (a) in the end zone and turns to the crowd and glares; or (b) in the end zone, however he makes no unusual expressions and simply jogs back to his bench carrying his helmet.

**Rulings:**

(a) and (b): Touchdown. Unsportsmanlike conduct. **The foul will be enforced on the Try.** Players are not allowed to remove their helmets on the field except in the situations designated in the Rulebook. The actions taken by the player after removing his helmet are irrelevant in determining whether the action is a foul.

**A.R. 12.101 PLAYER REMOVING HIS HELMET—TEAM A OR B**

Third-and-10 on B20. A2 runs and is tackled by B2 at the B15. (a) A2 then gets up off the ground and removes his helmet as he walks back to the huddle; or (b) B2 removes his helmet after getting up off the tackle.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Fourth-and-20 on B30. Unsportsmanlike conduct.
- (b) First-and-goal on B7½. Unsportsmanlike conduct.

**A.R. 12.102 PLAYER REMOVING HIS HELMET—FOUL BY OPPONENT**

Second-and-10 on A40. Back A2 runs to the A49 where he is tackled by the facemask by B1. After being tackled, A2 jumps up off the ground and immediately removes his helmet and glares at B1.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on A40. Replay the down because of the double fouls for facemask and unsportsmanlike conduct. If the contact by B1 had significantly altered the position of A2's helmet, he would be able to remove and adjust it without a foul.

**A.R. 12.103 PLAYER FROM BENCH AREA REMOVING HIS HELMET**

After a touchdown, a player from the bench comes on the field to congratulate his teammate in the end zone. Upon entering the field, the player takes his helmet off to celebrate with his teammates in the end zone, and he then (a) stays in the game for the Try after putting his helmet back on, or (b) leaves the field and does not participate in the Try.

**Rulings:**

(a) and (b). Touchdown. Kickoff A35. No foul. It is a foul if a coach, team staff member, or player who is not in uniform, enters the playing field, **which would be enforced on the Try.** But this player is in uniform, so the action is legal.

**A.R. 12.104 FOUL AGAINST OFFICIAL—PHYSICAL CONTACT**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. Punter A1 muffs the snap and is downed at the A35. B2 clips A2 after the play has ended (dead ball foul). Upset that a foul was called, B2 pushes the Field Judge.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-25 on B35. Disqualify B2. This is not a multiple foul, because all fouls against officials are enforced as fouls between downs. Both fouls are therefore enforced, though Team B will have the ball, because both fouls occurred during the dead ball period.

**A.R. 12.105 FOUL AGAINST OFFICIAL—PHYSICAL CONTACT**

Fourth-and-2 on B35. A1 runs to the B34 where he is tackled. Immediately after he is tackled, A1 jumps up and yells at the Line Judge arguing that he was tackled by the facemask. In the process, he bumps the official.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B49. Disqualify A1. All fouls against officials are enforced, and they are enforced as fouls between downs.

**A.R. 12.106 FOUL AGAINST OFFICIAL—VERBAL ABUSE**

Second-and-2 on B25. A1 runs to the B20 where he is tackled by the facemask. A1 jumps up and yells at the Umpire because he didn't think the foul had been called (although it had).

**Ruling:** First-and-goal on B25. Both fouls, unsportsmanlike conduct and facemask, are enforced, and the foul against the official is treated as a foul between downs, thus resulting in first-and-goal. Two violations of 12-3-1 (a) through (c) in the same game results in an automatic disqualification.

**A.R. 12.107 LAST PLAY OF HALF—FOUL AGAINST OFFICIAL**

Third-and-10 on B45. A1 passes to A2 at the B10 where B2 is guarding him closely. The Side Judge calls offensive pass interference. When B2 sees the flag, he thinks the foul was called on him, and he kicks the flag, or throws his helmet down, clearly to dispute the call. Time in the first half expires on the play.

**Ruling:** Half over. Fifteen-yard penalty enforced against Team B on the second-half kickoff. The offensive foul on the last play of the half results in the end of the half. The foul against the official is treated as a foul between downs. It therefore does not offset the pass interference, and it is enforced on the second half kickoff. B2 is not disqualified because he did not contact the official and did not throw his helmet at the official. However, a second violation of 12-3-1 (a) through (c) in the same game would result in an automatic disqualification.

**A.R. 12.108 THROWING BALL AT OFFICIAL**

First-and-10 on B12. Back A2 takes a handoff from QBA1 and runs for a touchdown, after which, he spikes the ball in the end zone away from players. B7 becomes upset because he felt the ball was spiked near him, and there was no flag thrown. B7 picks up the ball and deliberately throws it at the Field Judge: (a) hitting the Field Judge; or (b) missing him with the ball.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) Touchdown Team A and enforce the unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on the Try. Disqualify B7. The player is disqualified whether or not the ball hits the official.

**A.R. 12.109 TIMEOUT ON FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT—ATTEMPTING TO FREEZE KICKER**

Fourth-and-10 on B22. When Team A breaks the huddle to attempt a field goal, B1 calls a timeout. After the timeout, B2 then attempts to call another timeout to freeze the kicker. The officials ignore the second request, and: (a) the field goal is good; or (b) the attempt fails.

**Rulings:**

(a) Option: Field goal good. Kickoff 50 or A's ball, first-and-10 on B11 (take the points off the board).

(b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B11. The officials properly ignored the second request and did not stop the game. The unsportsmanlike penalty is deemed to occur on the play as a live ball foul. (Same ruling on a Try attempt).

*Note: If the officials mistakenly grant the request, the 15-yard penalty is enforced as a dead ball foul.*

**A.R. 12.110 FOUL DURING HALFTIME OR OVERTIME INTERMISSION**

As the teams are walking to the locker room at the end of the first half, or while awaiting the overtime coin toss, A1: (a) punches; or (b) taunts B1.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b): The 15-yard penalty will be assessed against Team A on the succeeding kickoff. A1 would also be disqualified for the punch. The taunt is a violation of 12-3-1 (a) through (c), and two such penalties in the same game results in an automatic disqualification.

**LEGAL/ILLEGAL BAT/KICK****A.R. 12.111 ILLEGAL BAT—BACKWARD PASS—FORWARD BAT—TEAM A**

Third-and-4 on A40. Quarterback A1 pitches the ball backward to running back A2 at the A35. A2 bats the ball in flight out of bounds at the A43.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-14 on A30. Illegally batting (or kicking) the ball by the offense on a scrimmage play, (other than a scrimmage kick beyond the line), is a 10-yard penalty and a loss of down. Since this foul occurred behind the line, the enforcement spot is the previous spot. If this foul occurred inside two minutes of either half, there would also be an option to run 10 seconds off the game clock.

**A.R. 12.112 2-POINT TRY ATTEMPT—BACKWARD PASS—ILLEGAL BAT—TEAM A**

On a 2-point Try from the B2, quarterback A1 pitches the ball backward toward back A2. A2 bats the ball in flight into the end zone where A3 falls on the ball.

**Ruling:** Try fails, kickoff A35. The penalty for an illegal bat in this situation includes a loss of down, so the Try fails, and the penalty yardage is not enforced on the kickoff. (12-5-1-c)

**A.R. 12.113 ILLEGAL BAT—CONTROLLED PASS THROWN FORWARD**

Second-and-6 on B40. End A3 leaps in the air to catch a pass and controls the ball at the B35. While in the air, he flips the ball forward to A4, and: (a) A4 runs for a touchdown; or (b) A4 muffs the ball, and it hits the ground.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b): Third-and-16 on 50. A controlled pass in flight can only be thrown backward; this is an illegal bat. Enforcement is from the previous spot with a loss of down. (12-5-1-c)

**A.R. 12.114 ILLEGAL BAT—BLOCKED PUNT—TEAM B**

Fourth-and-12 on A14. The punt is blocked and the ball rolls to the A4 where B2 bats the ball (giving it new impetus). The ball rolls over the end line.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A24. Since the punted ball did not go beyond the line of scrimmage, this is not a post-possession foul, and the illegal bat is enforced from the previous spot with an automatic first down. The result

of the play is a touchback because Team B's impetus put the ball through the end zone, but enforcement of the penalty is more advantageous for Team A.

**A.R. 12.115 ILLEGAL BAT—PUNT—BALL HITS TEAM B PLAYER**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. A1 bats the rolling kick at the B14 into B5 who is at the B12. The ball rebounds off B5 and goes into B's end zone where it is recovered by A3.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B30, or A's ball fourth-and-20 on A30. The illegal bat results in a touchback. If the previous spot enforcement option is selected, there is no loss of down, because this occurs beyond the line of scrimmage during a scrimmage kick.

***Note:** The illegal bat can be enforced from the previous spot or the dead ball spot, but since B5 is not deemed to have touched the ball, the result of the play is a touchback when the ball hits in the end zone untouched by Team B. Batting the ball creates a new impetus, so although it makes no difference on this play, the impetus that put the ball in the end zone is the bat, not the kick.*

**A.R. 12.116 ILLEGAL BAT—END ZONE**

Fourth-and-10 on A2. Runner A1 fumbles at the A1. The ball goes into the Team A end zone where A2 bats it out of bounds: (a) in the end zone; (b) on the two-yard line; or (c) to A3 who recovers the ball in the end zone.

**Rulings:** Safety in (a), (b), and (c). Safety kick A20, or B's ball, first-and-goal on A1. In all cases, Team B has the option of accepting a safety or enforcing the foul from the previous spot with a loss of down. A player may not bat a loose ball (other than a pass in flight) in any direction in the end zone. This is a foul even if the player is attempting to keep the ball in bounds.

**A.R. 12.117 LEGAL/ILLEGAL BAT—BACKWARD PASS—END ZONE INVOLVEMENT**

First-and-10 on A2. Quarterback A1 throws a backward pass to A3 in the end zone, and: (a) B1, while in the end zone, bats the backward pass while in flight over the end line; or (b) B1, while in the end zone, bats the grounded backward pass after A3 muffs the pass. The ball goes out of bounds at the A4.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Safety. Safety kick A20. Legal bat.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on A12. Illegal bat.

**A.R. 12.118 LEGAL BAT—PASS IN END ZONE**

Second-and-goal on B6. Runner A1 runs to his right and passes the ball forward from the B7 to A2 in the end zone. A2 bats the ball forward to A3 who catches the ball in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. A forward pass in flight may be batted, tipped, or deflected in any direction by any eligible player at any time.

**A.R. 12.119 BAT TO PREVENT BALL FROM GOING OUT OF BOUNDS**

Second-and-10 on B45. A1 runs to the B40 where he fumbles near the sideline. The ball is about to go out of bounds when B1 bats the ball toward the field of play, and B2 eventually recovers at the B35. B1 batted the ball: (a) toward Team A's goal line; or (b) toward his own goal line.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on B30. This is an illegal bat, and the 10-yard penalty is enforced from the spot of the fumble.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. The bat was backward, so it was legal.

**ILLEGALLY KICKING BALL**

**A.R. 12.120 ILLEGAL KICKING OF BALL IN POSSESSION**

Third-and-6 on B41. Quarterback A1 hands off to back A2 who runs to the B36. As he is being tackled, A2 stretches his arms out with the ball extending out over the B35. Prior to being down by contact, B2 kicks the ball out of A2's hands and falls on the ball.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B25. No player may deliberately kick any loose ball or a ball in player possession.

**A.R. 12.121 FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT—BEYOND LINE**

Fourth-and-3 on B25. Field goal kicker A1 runs to the B23 and drop-kicks the ball over the crossbar.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B28. The result of the play is a touchback, so accepting the penalty for an illegal scrimmage kick, 5 yards and a loss of down from the spot of the foul is more advantageous for Team B.

**A.R. 12.122 ILLEGAL KICKING AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Third-and-2 on A45. B1 intercepts a pass on the B15, runs to the A35, fumbles, and then kicks the ball out of bounds at the A5 to prevent A2 from recovering.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. The foul is enforced from the spot of the fumble as a foul during a backward pass or fumble. There is not a loss of down, because this occurred after a change of possession.

**A.R. 12.123 ILLEGAL KICKING—LOOSE BALL (BACKWARD PASS)—BEHIND LINE**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. The snap from center is muffed, and punter A1 never controlled the ball. A1 then kicks the ball while it is on the ground at the A30, and the ball rolls to the B48 where A3 falls on it.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A30. Enforce from the previous spot with a loss of down.

**A.R. 12.124 ILLEGAL KICKING - PUNT BEYOND LINE**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. A1's punt is short and is rolling untouched at the B45. Running downfield, A1 kicks the rolling ball out of frustration, and it goes out of bounds at the B20.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B45, or A fourth-and-20 on A30. This is a foul during a scrimmage kick, so Team B's options are to add the penalty to the end of the play, enforce it from the previous spot, or take the ball at the first touch spot. If the penalty is accepted, there is no loss of down, because this is illegal kicking beyond the line during a scrimmage kick.

**A.R. 12.125 ILLEGAL KICKING—FOURTH-DOWN FUMBLE—BEHIND LINE**

Fourth-and-5 on B15. On a field goal attempt, the snap is caught by A2 at the B23, but A2 fumbles the ball before A1 can kick the field goal. While the ball is loose on the ground, the kicker kicks the ball to prevent B2 from recovering it. The ball goes out of bounds at the B11.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B25. This is illegal kicking of a loose ball, which is enforced from the previous spot with a loss of down.

**A.R. 12.126 ACCIDENTAL KICKING OF LOOSE BALL**

Fourth-and-12 on A14. The punt is partially blocked and the ball rolls to the A6. B1 tries to pick it up there but accidentally kicks it into the end zone where B3 falls on it.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team B. Kickoff B35. Only the deliberate kicking of a loose ball is a foul. Accidental kicking or batting does not create a new impetus.

## **RULE 13 NON-PLAYER CONDUCT**

### **A.R. 13.1 SUBSTITUTE SHOVES RUNNER AFTER HE IS OUT OF BOUNDS**

Second-and-5 on 50. Runner A1 goes out of bounds in the Team B bench area at the B45. Substitute B12 shoves A1 to the ground out of bounds.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B30. Unsportsmanlike conduct by B12. Penalize from the succeeding spot. Disqualify B12 if the action is flagrant, (but this action is not the type that counts toward a future disqualification for similar conduct). Even though there is contact, which is normally unnecessary roughness, the foul was by a player not in the game at the time, so it is penalized as unsportsmanlike conduct.

### **A.R. 13.2 HEAD COACH COMES ON FIELD—CONFRONTS OFFICIAL**

Second-and-10 on B30. Upset when the Line Judge rules a forward pass is incomplete at the B15, A's head coach runs onto the field at the B15-yard line to calmly discuss the ruling with the Line Judge.

**Ruling:** Third-and-25 on B45. Unsportsmanlike conduct. Penalize 15 yards from the succeeding spot.

### **A.R. 13.3 HEAD COACH COMES ON FIELD TOO FAR FROM BENCH AREA**

Third-and-10 on B30. A1's pass falls incomplete at the B18 near the Team B sideline. The Team A head coach comes onto the field near the numbers to yell at the Side Judge on the opposite side of the field that he missed a defensive holding call.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-25 on B45. Unsportsmanlike conduct. No coach can come into the field of play to address a game official. Officials will have discretion to warn if the coach comes onto the field a yard or two to get their attention.

### **A.R. 13.4 NON-PLAYER SHOVES OFFICIAL**

Third-and-8 on A45. Quarterback A1 throws a pass to A2 near the sideline. The Line Judge rules the pass incomplete. As the teams line up for the next play, a non-playing member of Team A, A4, pushes the Down Judge.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-23 on A30. Unsportsmanlike conduct by non-playing personnel. Disqualify A4.

### **A.R. 13.5 NON-PLAYER IN SIX-FOOT BORDER—CONTACT WITH OFFICIAL**

Third-and-5 on A30. An injured Team A player, in street clothes and wearing an appropriate credential, stands in the six-foot, solid-white border next to the sideline and accidentally trips the Field Judge at the 50 who is covering a long run to the B20.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B35. The unsportsmanlike conduct penalty is enforced as a dead ball foul. If the action affected the outcome of the play in any way, the Referee would enforce a 15-yard penalty from the spot that he and the crew deem most equitable, including awarding/negating a score.

### **A.R. 13.6 NON-PLAYER IN SIX-FOOT BORDER—CONTACT WITH PLAYER**

Third-and-5 on B40. On the last play of the game with the score tied and no timeouts left for either team, QBA1 hands off to A2 who runs wide and down the sideline. A2 is at the B30 when he collides with a Team B player from the bench area who is standing on his sideline. A2 fumbles and A3 recovers at the B20. A2 is injured on the play.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B15 for an untimed down (A2 could remain in the game), or the Referee may award a touchdown if he and the crew feel that is equitable.

### **A.R. 13.7 CONTACT WITH COACH IN SIX-FOOT BORDER**

First-and-10 on A30. The Side Judge is covering a long run in front of A's bench area when he runs into Team A's head coach who is standing in the six-foot, solid-white border at the 50-yard line. The Side Judge is knocked to the ground. Team A scores.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. Unsportsmanlike conduct. The foul is enforced as a dead ball foul and enforcement is on the Try. If the action affected the outcome of the play in any way the Referee will enforce a 15-yard penalty from the spot that he and the crew deem most equitable, including awarding/negating a score.

### **A.R. 13.8 CONTACT WITH TEAM B COACH IN SIX-FOOT BORDER—TEAM A ALSO FOULS**

Third-and-10 on A45. A1 throws a swing pass to back A2 at the B45. A2 runs down the sideline to the B20 where he is tackled. The Side Judge, while covering the play, is knocked to the ground by a Team B assistant in the restricted white-border area, outside the Team B bench area. During A2's run, A7 held B3 at the B30.

**Ruling:** Third-and-10 on A45. The dead ball unsportsmanlike conduct combines with the live ball hold to create a double foul. The fouls offset at the previous spot and the down is replayed.

### **A.R. 13.9 SUBSTITUTE COMES ON FIELD DURING PLAY—RECOVERS FUMBLE**

Third-and-5 on B45. Runner A1 fumbles at the B35. (a) Substitute B12 comes off the bench and recovers the ball; or (b) substitute A12 comes off the bench and recovers the ball, at the B33.

**Rulings:**

(a) A's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Palpably unfair act by B12. The Referee will enforce a 15-yard penalty from the spot that he and the crew deem most equitable. Team A retains the ball. Disqualify B12.

(b) A's ball, fourth-and-20 on A40. Palpably unfair act by A12. The Referee will enforce a 15-yard penalty from the spot that he and the crew deem most equitable. Team A retains the ball. Disqualify A12.

### **A.R. 13.10 SUBSTITUTE COMES ON FIELD DURING PLAY—BATS LOOSE BALL**

First-and-10 on A45. Runner A1 fumbles near the sideline at the 50. Substitute B12 runs onto the field of play and bats the ball to player B6 who recovers at the B45.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Palpably unfair act by B12. The Referee will enforce a 15-yard penalty from the spot that he and the crew deem most equitable. Disqualify B12.

- A.R. 13.11 SUBSTITUTE COMES ON FIELD DURING PLAY—PUSHES OPPONENT AND RECOVERS FUMBLE**  
 Second-and-5 on B45. Runner A1 fumbles in front of his own bench. Substitute A12 comes onto the field, pushes B2 away, and recovers the ball at the B40.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Palpably unfair act. The Referee will enforce a 15-yard penalty from the spot that he and the crew deem most equitable. Disqualify A12.
- A.R. 13.12 SUBSTITUTE COMES ON FIELD DURING PLAY—TACKLES RUNNER**  
 A1 is on his way to an apparent touchdown when B12 comes off his bench to tackle A1 at the B30.  
**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A, and the 15-yard penalty is enforced on the Try. Palpably unfair act. The game officials should allow the play to continue to its conclusion and then penalize Team B. If it is clear that A1 would have scored, the Referee will award the touchdown. Disqualify B12.
- A.R. 13.13 CONTACT WITH OFFICIAL BY COACH/PLAYER DURING HALFTIME/GOING TO OVERTIME**  
 After the end of the first half (or second half if the game is going into overtime), a Team A coach or player contacts an official while arguing with him as they leave the field, in the tunnel, or prior to the coin toss before the overtime period begins.  
**Ruling:** Enforce the 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct against Team A on the ensuing kickoff. Disqualify the coach/player. The officials' jurisdiction continues during intermissions.
- A.R. 13.14 OFFICIALS' JURISDICTION BEGINS ONE HOUR AND 40 MINUTES PRIOR TO KICKOFF**  
 While the teams are warming up 30 minutes before the game, A1 punches B1 on the field.  
**Ruling:** Team A will be assessed a 15-yard unnecessary roughness on the opening kickoff, and A1 is disqualified. The officials' jurisdiction starts when the pregame security meeting takes place approximately 100 minutes before kickoff, and all unnecessary roughness/unsportsmanlike conduct rules take effect at that time.
- A.R. 13.15 SUBSTITUTE LEAVES BENCH AREA DURING PLAY—ENTERS FIELD TO CELEBRATE AFTER PLAY**  
 Third-and-10 on A40. Receiver A4 catches a pass near the sideline at the 50, breaks a tackle, and has a clear path to the end zone. Substitute A13, not wearing a helmet, runs down the sideline (just outside the white) parallel with the runner all the way to the end zone. After A4 scores, A13 runs into the end zone and jumps on A4's back to celebrate, and then high fives other teammates before returning to the bench.  
**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. The 15-yard penalty will be enforced on the Try. It is unsportsmanlike conduct for a substitute, coach or any team personnel to be out of the team bench area during the play. There is no prohibition against uniformed substitutes coming onto the field to celebrate *after the play*, if they comply with normal celebration rules. Further, the rules against a player removing his helmet do not apply to substitutes coming off the bench. This unsportsmanlike conduct foul is not one that could lead to a disqualification.
- A.R. 13.16 NON-UNIFORMED PLAYERS LEAVE THE TEAM BENCH AREA TO CELEBRATE AFTER TD**  
 Third-and-10 on A40. QBA1 throws a pass to A2 who catches the ball and scores a touchdown. After A2 scores, uniformed and non-uniformed players and coaches or other team personnel run onto the field and surround A2 in the end zone to celebrate.  
**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. The 15-yard penalty is enforced on the Try. It is legal for teammates who are dressed in uniform to leave the bench area to celebrate after a score, but it is unsportsmanlike conduct or players who are not in uniform, coaches, or other team personnel to come onto the field to celebrate. This would not be the type of foul that qualifies toward disqualification for two such fouls unless the coach or staff member directs his actions toward an opponent.
- A.R. 13.17 COACH OR TEAM STAFF MEMBER LEAVES THE TEAM BENCH AREA TO CELEBRATE AFTER TD**  
 Third-and-10 on A40. QBA1 throws a pass to A2 who catches the ball and scores a touchdown. After A2 scores, a Team A coach or team staff member runs down the sideline and celebrates with A2 in the end zone.  
**Ruling:** Touchdown Team A. The 15-yard penalty is enforced on the Try. It is unsportsmanlike conduct if any coach or team staff member leaves the bench area to participate in a celebration. This would not be they type of foul that qualifies toward disqualification for two such fouls unless the coach or staff member directs his actions toward an opponent.
- A.R. 13.18 FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT—SNOW BEING CLEARED FROM FIELD**  
 Fourth-and-10 on B30. Team A calls a timeout to prepare for a field goal in snowy conditions. During the timeout, (a) players begin clearing snow from the area the kick will be made using only their hands and feet; or (b) team personnel or grounds crew begin clearing snow from the same area.  
**Rulings:**  
 (a) No foul. Players may help clear snow using only their hands or feet (no towels, etc.)  
 (b) Fourth-and-25 on B45. Unsportsmanlike conduct. It is impermissible for the grounds crew or other team personnel to clear away snow for a Try, field goal, punt, or free kick. Officials should try to prevent this as soon as they see someone coming out on the field, thus avoiding the need to call a penalty.
- A.R. 13.19 BENCH PERSONNEL ENTERS FIELD OF PLAY—SNAP OCCURS—DOES NOT INTERFERE**  
 Second-and-five on A40. Before the snap, a Team B attendant runs onto the field to grab a towel that fell off a player. While he is on the field behind the offense, the ball is snapped, and A1 throws an incomplete pass. The action by the attendant did not affect the outcome of the play.  
**Ruling:** Third-and-five on A40. Since the movement onto the field did not affect the play, there is no penalty. If there



is any question in a game official's mind that the movement could affect the play, the game official should blow the whistle immediately and kill the play. If the action affected the outcome of the play, in any way, the Referee would enforce a 15-yard penalty from the spot that the Referee and the crew deem most equitable, including awarding or negating a score.

**A.R. 13.20 SUBSTITUTE ENTERS FIELD FROM HIS BENCH AREA BEFORE/AFTER THE SNAP**

Third-and-10 on 50. Substitute B11 is attempting to get on the field of play as the eleventh defensive player. A1 throws an incomplete pass on the play: (a) B11 is stepping on the defensive side of the ball with his right foot on the field, but his left foot does not touch in the field of play before the snap. He then continues onto the field. (b) B11 steps on the field with both feet, but he is on the offensive side of the ball when the ball is snapped.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, third-and-5 on B45. Illegal substitution. To be legally on the field, an incoming substitute must get both feet or body part other than a hand or foot down prior to the snap, or it is illegal substitution. Depending on the action taken by the player as the play develops, a 5 or 15-yard penalty could be assessed.
- (b) A's ball, third-and-5 on B45. Defensive offside. B11 is legally on the field but is offside at the snap. If B11 was on the field and near the offensive backfield at the snap, blow the play dead for unimpeded to the QB/Kicker.

## RULE 14 PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

### FOULS BEFORE SNAP

#### A.R. 14.1 MULTIPLE DEAD BALL FOULS—TEAM B

Third-and-5 on A40. B1 encroaches, continues on, and knocks QBA1 down.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Multiple dead ball fouls for encroachment and a personal foul late hit. The unnecessary roughness penalty will be accepted.

#### A.R. 14.2 TEAM A DEAD BALL FOULS WITH/WITHOUT DELAY

Second-and-3 on B40. A1 false starts and then A2 grabs B1 by the facemask and throws him to the ground (not a disqualifying act): (a) immediately after the false start; or (b) after a significant delay.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-18 on A45. Multiple dead ball fouls for false start and unnecessary roughness. The unnecessary roughness foul will be accepted. (14-1-3)
- (b) Second-and-23 on A40. Because of the delay between fouls for false start and unnecessary roughness, both dead ball fouls are enforced.

#### A.R. 14.3 FALSE START—AFTER DELAY—DEAD BALL FOULS BY BOTH TEAMS

First-and-10 on A25. A2 false starts, and after a significant delay, B2 and A3 slam one another to the ground (not a part of the false start action, and not a disqualifying act).

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-15 on A20. The false start is enforced, and the subsequent dead ball fouls are clearly separate from the timing of the false start, and therefore offset at the succeeding spot.

### FOULS ON RUNNING PLAYS

#### A.R. 14.4 DOWN BEYOND LINE—OFFENSE FOULS—BEYOND/BEHIND DEAD BALL SPOT

First-and-10 on A20. Runner is downed on A28. During the run: (a) A2 held on the A30; or (b) A2 held on the A24.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-12 on A18. Offensive foul for holding in advance of dead ball (basic) spot.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-16 on A14. Offensive foul for holding behind the dead ball (basic) spot.

#### A.R. 14.5 DOWN BEHIND LINE—DEFENSE FOULS BEYOND LINE

First-and-10 on A20. The runner is downed on the A18. During the run, B1 held on the A26.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A25. The dead ball spot is behind the line, so the defensive holding is enforced from the previous spot. (14-3-6)

#### A.R. 14.6 DOWN BEHIND LINE—OFFENSE FOULS—BEYOND/BEHIND LINE

Second-and-10 on A40. Runner A1 is downed on the A36. During the run, A2 held on the: (a) A44; or (b) A36.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b) Second-and-20 on A30. Enforce both offensive holds from the previous spot.

**Note:** If the penalty is declined, third-and-14 on A36.

#### A.R. 14.7 OFFENSE FOULS OUT OF BOUNDS IN END ZONE—SAFETY

First-and-10 on A2. Runner A1 is downed on the A3 near the sideline. During A1's run, B1 went out of bounds in the end zone to avoid a block and was pulled to the ground by A2 out of bounds behind the goal line.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick A20. The offensive holding foul was out of bounds in the end zone, so a safety is an option.

#### A.R. 14.8 FOUL IN FIELD OF PLAY—AFTER INTERCEPTION IN END ZONE

First-and-10 on B40. B1 intercepts in the end zone and runs with the ball. A2 illegally trips B2 at the B5 during the run. B1 is downed in the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Tripping. All defensive fouls during a running play are enforced from the dead ball spot, which is transferred to the 20-yard line as a result of the touchback.

#### A.R. 14.9 FOUL DURING RUN—FUMBLE—RECOVERED BY TEAM A

Third-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 fumbles at the A34. A2 recovers and is downed at the A42. While A1 was a runner:

- (a) A3 held at the A28; or (b) B2 grabbed and twisted A2's facemask at the A32.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, third-and-20 on A20. Offensive holding enforced from the previous spot.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B43. Facemask enforced from the dead ball spot.

#### A.R. 14.10 LEGAL/ILLEGAL CONTACT WITH FACEMASK BY RUNNER

Second-and-10 on B30. A2 runs right to the B10 where A2 stiff-arms B1 in the facemask and continues into the end zone for an apparent touchdown. (a) A2 leaves his hand on the facemask for three yards but does not grasp it; (b) A2 delivers a blow with the stiff arm; (c) A2 grabs the facemask and controls the defender (but does not twist, turn, or pull) and releases it after three yards; or (d) A2 twists and turns the facemask.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Touchdown Team A. Kickoff A35. No foul.
- (b) A's ball, second-and-5 on B25. Unnecessary roughness.
- (c) and (d) A's ball, second-and-5 on B25. Facemask.

## **FOUL DURING A RUN—FOLLOWED BY CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

### **A.R. 14.11 FUMBLE AND DEFENSIVE FOUL BEHIND LINE—FOLLOWED BY CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Third-and-10 on A20. Quarterback A1 fades back and fumbles on the A10 where B1 recovers. Prior to the fumble, B2 held A3 at the A12.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A25. The defensive holding foul is enforced from the previous spot.

*Note: A defensive foul during a run followed by a change of possession is penalized from the spot of the fumble. If that spot is behind the line of scrimmage, the foul is enforced from the previous spot.*

### **A.R. 14.12 FOUL BY TEAM A—FOLLOWED BY CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Third-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 fumbles or throws a backward pass at the A34. B1 recovers and is downed on the A33. While A1 was a runner: (a) A2 held on the A28; or (b) A3 clipped B2 on the A32.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A33. Decline penalty for offensive holding.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on A18. The clipping foul before the recovery of the fumble or backward pass (change of possession) is carried over and the penalty is enforced from the dead ball spot.

### **A.R. 14.13 FOUL BY TEAM B—FOLLOWED BY CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Second-and-10 on A38. Runner A1 fumbles or throws a backward pass at the A42. B1 recovers and is downed on the A30. While A1 was a runner: (a) B2 pushed and held A3's head back on the A40; or (b) B3 grabbed and twisted A2's facemask on the A40.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on A47. Illegal hands to the face. Enforce from the spot of the fumble or backward pass since that spot is beyond the line of scrimmage.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B43. Facemask. Enforce from the spot of the fumble or backward pass since that spot is beyond the line of scrimmage.

### **A.R. 14.14 KICKOFF—TEAM A FOUL—FOLLOWED BY CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

B1 receives the kickoff at the B10. B1 runs to the B25 where he fumbles and A2 recovers there. During B1's run, A15 blocks low at the B15.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Enforce the low block from the spot of the fumble.

### **A.R. 14.15 INTERCEPTION - TEAM A FOUL—FOLLOWED BY CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Second-and-10 on A35. B1 intercepts a pass on the B35, and, during the return, he fumbles on the B40 where A1 recovers. (a) A2 tripped B1 on the B36 before the fumble; (b) A3 held B2 on the A36 before the interception; (c) A4 and A5 chop blocked B7 before the interception.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Enforce the tripping foul from the spot of the fumble.
- (b) A's ball, second-and-20 on A25. Enforce the holding foul from the previous spot because Team B did not retain possession of the ball.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Enforce the chop block foul from the spot of the interception and Team B retains possession.

### **A.R. 14.16 FOUL BY TEAM A—FUMBLE AND CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Second-and-10 on B40. A2 and A3 chop block as A1 drops back to pass. A1 then scrambles and runs to the B35 where he fumbles. B1 recovers the ball at the B30 and: (a) runs to the 50 where he is downed; or (b) runs to the 50 where he fumbles, with A3 recovering the fumble at the 50.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A35. The chop block before the change of possession is carried over and the penalty is enforced from the dead ball spot.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. The chop block, before the change of possession, is enforced from the spot of B's recovery of the loose ball.

## **FOULS DURING PASSING PLAYS**

### **A.R. 14.17 FOUL BY EITHER TEAM PRIOR TO—LEGAL FORWARD PASS**

Second-and-10 on A10. A1's pass is incomplete. Prior to the pass: (a) B1 held receiver A2; (b) A3 held B2 on the A3-yard line; or (c) A3 held B2 in A's end zone.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) First-and-10 on A15. Defensive holding. Previous spot enforcement.
- (b) Second-and-15 on A5 or third-and-10 on A10. Offensive holding. Previous spot enforcement.
- (c) Safety. Safety kick A20. Offensive holding that occurs in Team A's end zone carries the option of a safety.

### **A.R. 14.18 ILLEGAL CONTACT—PRIOR TO PASS OR RUN**

Second-and-10 on A10. Quarterback A1 drops back to pass, and while A1 is in the pocket, B2 chucks A2 on the A17. A1 then: (a) passes complete to A3 who is tackled on the A20; (b) passes incomplete; or (c) scrambles, runs, and is tackled at the A11.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) First-and-10 on A20. Illegal contact. Decline the penalty.
- (b) First-and-10 on A15. Illegal contact. Enforced from the previous spot.
- (c) First-and-10 on A16. Illegal contact. Enforced from the end of the run.

**A.R. 14.19 PERSONAL FOUL BY DEFENSE—PRIOR TO COMPLETION**

Third-and-10 on A30. Prior to A1's forward pass, B1 grabs and twists lineman A3's facemask. A1's pass is then completed to A2 who is tackled at the: (a) A35; or (b) A25.

**Rulings:**

- (a) First-and-10 on 50. The facemask is enforced from the dead ball spot.
- (b) First-and-10 on A45. The facemask is enforced from the previous spot.

**A.R. 14.20 PERSONAL FOUL BY OFFENSE—PRIOR TO INTERCEPTION—TEAM B MAINTAINS/LOSES POSSESSION**

Third-and-10 on A30. Prior to A1's forward pass, lineman A2 chop blocks. A1's pass is intercepted by B1 at the 50. B1 returns the interception to the A35 where: (a) B1 is tackled, or (b) B1 fumbles and A3 recovers at the A30.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A20. Chop block. The chop block is tacked on from the dead ball spot.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on A35. Chop block. The chop block is enforced from the spot of the interception.

**A.R. 14.21 PERSONAL FOUL BEFORE OR AFTER INTERCEPTION—TOUCHBACK**

Second-and-10 on B25. A1's pass is intercepted by B1 in the end zone where B1 is tackled. (a) A3 chop blocks before the pass; or (b) A4 tackles B1 by the facemask in the end zone.

**Rulings:** (a) and (b): B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Chop block/facemask. As the play resulted in a touchback, personal fouls before or after the change of possession are enforced from the 20-yard line.

**A.R. 14.22 PERSONAL FOUL BY TEAM A PRIOR TO CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

First-and-10 on 50. A4 and A5 chop block. The pass is complete to A2 at the B30, but A2 fumbles at the B28 and B1 recovers there and returns the fumble to the B40.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. The chop block is enforced from the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 14.23 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—EXCEPTION TO HALF THE DISTANCE ENFORCEMENT**

Third-and-5 on A10. Quarterback A1 is called for intentional grounding on the A4.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-11 on A4. Intentional grounding. If the spot of the foul is more than half the distance, the enforcement is to put the ball at the spot of the foul.

**A.R. 14.24 INTENTIONAL GROUNDING—HALF-DISTANCE ENFORCEMENT**

Third-and-5 on A10. Quarterback A1 is called for intentional grounding on the A6.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-10 on A5. Intentional grounding. The penalty for intentional grounding is enforced half the distance to the goal, or the spot of the foul, whichever is more advantageous to the defense.

**A.R. 14.25 ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS BEYOND LINE—TEAM A PERSONAL FOUL**

Third-and-15 on A30. Quarterback A1 scrambles to the A32 where he throws a forward pass to A2 at the B20. The pass is underthrown, and B1 is in position to intercept the pass, when A2 grabs and twists B2's facemask while the pass is in the air. The pass falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-18 at the A27 or third-and-28 at the A17. If the illegal forward pass foul is enforced, it is a five-yard penalty from the spot of the pass, and a loss of down. If the personal foul facemask is enforced, it is from the end of the run, as this is deemed to be a running play. Pass interference is not an option since the pass was thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage.

*Note: Additional plays involving penalty enforcement during forward pass plays can be found in Rule 8 of the Casebook.*

**FOULS DURING FREE KICKS**

**A.R. 14.26 KICKOFF—DOUBLE FOUL WITH A CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Kickoff from the A35. A1 is in an illegal formation, and B1 catches the ball at the B6 and returns it to the B30. B2 blocks low at the B10 during the return.

**Ruling:** Re-kick A35 or B's ball, first-and-10 on B5. This is a double foul with a change of possession, so the illegal formation is declined, and Team B's illegal low block is enforced from the spot of the foul; or B has the option to replay the down, which is the option B would likely choose.

**A.R. 14.27 KICKOFF—FOUL BY TEAM A DURING KICK/RETURN**

Kickoff from the A35. A2 pins B2's head back with an open hand at the B45 during the return. B1 returns the kick to the B23.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B28. Illegal use of hands. During the return, Team A has become the defense, so illegal use of hands by Team A is a five-yard penalty.

**A.R. 14.28 KICKOFF—FOUL BY TEAM A DURING KICK**

As an onside kick from the A35 is rolling at the A46, A1 blocks B1 on the A43. After A1's block, B2 picks up the ball on the A44 and runs it back to the A20.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-goal on A10. Illegal blocking or use of hands during a free kick. Team A may not block within 10 yards of its restraining line until the ball is legally touched. The location of the ball at the time of the block is irrelevant. Team A fouls before the change of possession on a free kick can be enforced from the dead ball spot, as long as Team B retains possession throughout the down.

*Note: Additional plays involving penalty enforcement during free kick plays are in Rule 6 of the Casebook.*

## FOULS DURING SCRIMMAGE KICKS

### A.R. 14.29 DOUBLE FOUL—TEAM A FAILURE TO REPORT/TEAM B OFFSIDE

Fourth-and-10 on A30. Tackle A3 enters the game, goes into the huddle without reporting, and takes a wingback position in a punt formation. After the punt, B1 muffs the ball on the B30 and A2 recovers it there. B2 was offside. **Ruling:** Fourth-and-10 on A30. Illegal formation by Team A for a player wearing an ineligible number playing an eligible position without reporting. Also, defensive offside. The penalties offset.

### A.R. 14.30 FIRST TOUCH—TEAM B FOUL—DURING KICK/RETURN

Fourth-and-6 on A40. A1 is the first to touch the punt on the B24. B1 recovers at the B18 and runs to the B30. B2 held on the B45: (a) during the punt; or (b) during the run by B1.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B9. Offensive holding. The post-possession foul is enforced from the end of the kick because that is behind the spot of B's foul. The enforcement of B's foul negates the first touch.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Offensive holding. The penalty is enforced from the dead ball spot, since the foul occurred during the run, and the run ended behind the spot of the foul.

### A.R. 14.31 FIRST TOUCH—TEAM B FOUL—OFFSIDE/PUSHING TEAMMATE

Fourth-and-10 on A45. A1 first touches and downs the punt on the B10: (a) B1 was offside; or (b) B2 pushed his teammate from behind into the right guard at the snap.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B10, if Team A declines the defense offside; or A's ball, fourth-and-5 on 50.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Unnecessary roughness for pushing a teammate into the offensive formation on a scrimmage kick or Try. This foul is enforced from the previous spot.

### A.R. 14.32 FIRST TOUCH—TEAM B FOUL—DURING PUNT/RETURN—FUMBLE

Fourth-and-15 on A10. A3 first touches the punt at the 50. B1 recovers at the B40 and fumbles at the A35, where A2 recovers. B2 held on the A30: (a) during the punt; or (b) during the run by B1.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, fourth-and-5 on A20. Since Team B lost possession during the down, this is not a post possession foul. The holding penalty is therefore enforced from the previous spot, and with the enforcement of a foul, the first touch violation is eliminated. The holding foul is a 10-yard penalty (with no automatic first down) because it occurred during a kick that went beyond the line (9-1-4(e)). Team A can also decline the penalty, thus giving Team B the ball at the spot of first touch.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on 50 (spot of first touch). As this foul was during the return, it is a foul on a running play, with enforcement from the spot of the foul, (A30), or the end of the run, (A35). If Team A accepts B's holding penalty, it will be enforced from the A35, resulting in B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Team A will therefore decline the penalty, and B will take the ball at the first touch spot, the 50.

### A.R. 14.33 FIRST TOUCH—RUN AND FUMBLE—TEAM B FOULS—BEFORE/AFTER TOUCHDOWN BY TEAM A

Fourth-and-3 on A45. A1 first touches the punt on the B10. B1 recovers on the B4 and fumbles on the B8. A2 recovers and runs into B's end zone. During A2's run, B2 grabbed and twisted A2's facemask on the B6: (a) before; or (b) after A2 crossed the goal line.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) Touchdown Team A; the foul is enforced on the Try. When A accepts the live ball foul, the first touching violation is negated by the foul. If B's foul was not a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul, there would be no enforcement option for the non-major foul because the dead ball spot is in the end zone, so the foul would be declined by rule and Team B would be awarded the ball at the first touch spot.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B5. Facemask. When Team A crosses the goal line, and there hasn't been a live ball foul on the play, the first touch spot is used to give B the ball. The dead ball foul is then enforced from the succeeding spot, the B10 (the first touch spot).

### A.R. 14.34 SCRIMMAGE KICK – FIRST TOUCH – TEAM B ADVANCES – DEAD BALL FOUL BY TEAM B

Fourth-and-10 on A40. A1's punt is rolling at the B20 where it is touched by A3, B1 picks up the punt on the B15 and runs to the B12 where he is tackled. Immediately after the play is over, B2 shoves A4 to the ground.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B10. First touch and unnecessary roughness. Since there was a "first touch" by Team A, B has the option of taking the ball at that spot of first touching, with the dead ball foul enforced from that spot. While the enforcement of a live ball foul eliminates the ability to take the ball at the first touch spot, the enforcement of dead ball fouls (by either team) does not eliminate that option.

### A.R. 14.35 DOUBLE FOUL—INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL/KICK CATCH INTERFERENCE—CHANGE OF POSSESSION

Fourth-and-10 on A40. A1 punts the ball, and B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal at the B20. B1 is in position to catch the ball when it hits A2 in the air at the B21. B1 then picks up the ball at the B15 and runs to the B40 where he fumbles and A2 recovers.

**Ruling:** A's ball, fourth-and-10 on A40. Invalid fair catch signal and interference with the opportunity to catch a kick. Since Team B did not retain possession, the fouls offset, and the down is replayed.

### A.R. 14.36 DOUBLE FOUL WITH A CHANGE—INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL/KICK CATCH INTERFERENCE

Fourth-and-10 on 50. B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal as he waits to catch the punt at the B20. A1 bumps B1 before the punted ball arrives, but B1 catches the ball anyway at the B20.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B15, or Team B has the option to replay. Invalid fair catch signal and interference with the opportunity to catch a kick. Double foul with a change of possession.

**A.R. 14.37 TEAM B FOUL DURING KICK—TOUCHBACK**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. The punt rolls out of bounds in the end zone. During the punt, there is a foul by B1 at the B12. The foul is: (a) clipping by B1 at the B12; or (b) blocking by B1 at the B12 after giving a fair catch signal at the B14.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B6. Clipping. Since the foul was inside the B20, it is enforced from the spot of the foul.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B6. Blocking after giving a fair catch signal is a spot foul.

**A.R. 14.38 TEAM B FOUL DURING PUNT—KICK ENDS IN END ZONE**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. During the punt, B1 commits an illegal block in the back at the B40. B2 catches the punt in the end zone and returns it to the 50 where he is tackled.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B10. Illegal block in the back. Since the kick ended in the end zone, the foul is enforced from the end of the kick (B20), as that is behind the spot of the foul.

**A.R. 14.39 TEAM B FOUL IN END ZONE DURING PUNT**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. During the punt, B1 clips A2 in the end zone. The punt goes out of bounds at the B6.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. Clipping. This is not a safety because Team B did not run with the ball. When a post-possession foul occurs in the end zone, it is deemed to have occurred at the 20-yard line if Team A is responsible for the ball entering Team B's end zone. The penalty is enforced from the end of the kick, as that spot is behind the spot of the foul.

**A.R. 14.40 TEAM A ILLEGALLY KICKING A BLOCKED PUNT—IN FIELD OF PLAY/END ZONE**

Fourth-and-10 on A10. A1's punt is blocked, and A1 kicks the rolling ball off the ground: (a) at the A2; or (b) from three yards deep in the end zone. The ball goes out of bounds at the A25.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-goal on A5. Illegally kicking a loose ball. Since the penalty occurred behind the line of scrimmage, in the field of play, it is enforced from the previous spot, with a loss of down.
- (b) Safety, safety kick A20, or B's ball, first-and-10 on A15. Team B can accept the option of a safety or enforce the foul from the dead ball spot, as a foul during a scrimmage kick.

**A.R. 14.41 PUNT—INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—KICKER OUT OF BOUNDS**

Fourth-and-15 on B48. B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal at the B10-yard line. The punted ball is rolling on the ground near the sideline at the B1. Flyer A1 avoids blocker B2 at the 15-yard line by going out of bounds. A1 re-establishes and downs the ball at the B1.

**Ruling:** A's ball, fourth-and-15 on B48, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B5. Invalid fair catch signal by B1 (clean hands) and Team A fouls for illegal touching of a kick and player going out of bounds during a punt. This is a double foul with a change of possession so Team B would most likely elect to replay the down.

**A.R. 14.42 TEAM B FOUL—BLOCKED KICK**

Fourth-and-15 on A35. A1's punt is blocked behind the line of scrimmage and is recovered by B1 at the A30. During the kick, B2 tackled flyer A2 at the line of scrimmage.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A40. The foul by B2 is enforced as a defensive hold because the kick did not cross the line of scrimmage.

*Note: Additional plays involving penalty enforcement during scrimmage kick plays are in Rule 9 of the Casebook.*

**FOULS DURING A BACKWARD PASS OR FUMBLE**

**A.R. 14.43 TEAM B FOUL DURING FUMBLE—TEAM A RECOVERS THEIR OWN FUMBLE AND ADVANCES**

First-and-10 on 50. A1 runs to the B40 and fumbles. During the loose ball, B1 grabs and pulls A1's facemask in an effort to recover the ball. A2 recovers at the B35 and runs to the B20 where he is tackled.

**Ruling:** First-and-goal on B10. The facemask penalty is enforced half-the-distance from the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 14.44 TEAM A FOUL DURING FUMBLE—TEAM B RECOVERS AND ADVANCES**

First-and-10 on B40. A1 runs to the B35 where he fumbles. During the loose ball, A1 grabs and twists B1's facemask at the B30. B2 recovers the ball at the B30 and runs to the 50 where he is tackled.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A35. Because the personal foul happened prior to the recovery of a fumble, (or backward pass or interception), the facemask penalty carries over and is tacked on to the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 14.45 TEAM A FOUL BEHIND/BEYOND LINE—DURING FUMBLE BEHIND THE LINE**

Second-and-5 on A40. A1 runs to the A38 where he fumbles. In the scramble during the loose ball, A2 grabs B2 and pulls him away from the ball (A2 makes no effort to recover the ball) at the: (a) A36; or (b) A42. A1 recovers the ball at the A45.

**Rulings:** In both (a) and (b), second-and-15 on A30. Enforce the offensive holding from the previous spot.

**A.R. 14.46 TEAM A FOUL BEHIND/BEYOND LINE—DURING FUMBLE BEYOND THE LINE**

Second-and-5 on A40. A1 runs to the A43 where he fumbles. In the scramble during the loose ball, A2 grabs B2 and

pulls him away from the ball at the: (a) A36; (b) A42; or (c) A44. A2 makes no effort to recover the ball. A1 recovers the ball at the A45.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-15 on A30. Offensive holding. Enforce from the previous spot.
- (b) Second-and-13 on A32. Offensive holding. Enforce from the spot of the foul.
- (c) Second-and-12 on A33. Offensive holding. Enforce from the spot of the fumble.

**A.R. 14.47 TEAM B FOUL DURING FUMBLE BEYOND THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE**

Second-and-5 on A40. A1 runs to the A43 where he fumbles. In the scramble to recover the loose ball, B2 grabs A2 and pulls him away from the ball at the: (a) A36; (b) A42; or (c) A44. B2 makes no effort to recover the ball. A1 recovers the ball at the A45.

**Rulings:** In (a), (b), and (c), first-and-10 on A48. The defensive holding penalty is enforced from the spot of the fumble.

**A.R. 14.48 TEAM A FUMBLES IN ITS END ZONE—TEAM A FOULS**

Third-and-10 on A5. A1 drops back into his end zone and fumbles the ball there. During the loose ball, A2 grabs and twists B2's facemask in the end zone. A1 then recovers the fumble: (a) at the A4; or (b) in the end zone.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Safety. Safety kick A20. The facemask occurred in the end zone, but the dead ball spot was in the field of play. Therefore, the foul is "used" to get the safety, so it cannot be tacked on at the spot of the safety kick. (14-2-2-b)
- (b) Safety. Safety kick A10. Since the play results in a safety, the facemask is not "used" to get the safety; it can be enforced on the ensuing free kick.

**A.R. 14.49 FUMBLE IN END ZONE—TEAM B FOUL IN FIELD OF PLAY—TEAM A'S IMPETUS**

Receiver B1 catches a free kick or punt, or intercepts a pass, in his end zone. While there and running with the ball, B1 fumbles, and the ball rolls to the B2 where B3 intentionally kicks it out of bounds at the B4.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B1. Illegally kicking the ball. Since A's impetus put the ball in the end zone, where B1 intercepted and fumbled, the spot of the fumble is deemed to be the 20-yard line. Team B fouled behind that spot, so enforcement is from the spot of the foul, the B2.

**A.R. 14.50 NOT MOMENTUM—TEAM B FUMBLE IN END ZONE—FOUL BY TEAM A**

Third-and-10 on B40. A1's pass is intercepted by B1 at the B4, and his momentum carries him into the end zone where he scrambles to try and run it out. While he is running in the end zone, B1 fumbles, and the ball rolls out to the B5 where it is recovered by B1, and he is downed. During the fumble, while the ball was rolling in the field of play, A2 blocks B2 low (anywhere).

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B20. Illegal block below the waist. Because Team B has possession at the end of the down and there are no other fouls, the foul can be enforced from the dead ball spot. Team B would also have the option to enforce the foul from the spot of the fumble, which is the goal line on this play. Momentum does not apply because the ball was not declared dead in the end zone in Team B's possession.

**5 VS. 15**

**A.R. 14.51 DOUBLE FOUL—TEAM B OFFSIDE—TEAM A CLIP/HOLD**

Second-and-5 on A30. Runner A1 is downed on A36. B1 was offside. Tackle A2: (a) held; or (b) clipped during the run.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-5 on A30. Replay the down. Defense offside and holding by the offense.
- (b) Second-and-20 on A15; 5 vs. 15. Defense offside and clipping by the offense. Penalize from previous spot.

**A.R. 14.52 DOUBLE DEAD BALL FOULS - AFTER READY FOR PLAY**

Second-and-5 on B20. Guard A2, after getting into a three-point stance, moves his legs abruptly. The officials blow the play dead, after which B1 grabs quarterback A1 and throws him to the ground.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-goal on B10. False start and unnecessary roughness. 5 vs. 15 enforcement applies since both dead ball fouls occurred after the ready for play.

**A.R. 14.53 RUNNER SPIKES BALL IMMEDIATELY AFTER BEING TACKLED – TEAM B COMMITS A PERSONAL FOUL**

First-and-10-B20. Runner A2 runs to the B8 yard line for a first down and immediately jumps up and spikes the ball toward the end zone. B3 is offended and knocks A2 down.

**Ruling:** A first-and-Goal B8. Since both fouls were dead ball fouls after the play, there is no 5 vs. 15 enforcement and the fouls offset at the dead ball spot.

**Note:** 5 vs. 15 enforcement does apply to fouls after the ready for play and before the snap, but 5 vs. 15 enforcement does not apply if the 5-yard and 15-yard penalties occur after the play ends and before the next ready for play.

**A.R. 14.54 MULTIPLE AND DOUBLE FOULS**

Third-and-3 on A28. A1 is illegally in motion at the snap. Team A has six men on the line of scrimmage. A3 runs to the A40 where he is tackled by the facemask by B3. B4 was offside at the snap.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A43. Team A, illegal motion and illegal formation; Team B, offside and personal foul facemask. 5 vs. 15 enforcement applies if there is at least one 15-yard penalty by one team, and one or more simple 5's by the other team.



**A.R. 14.55 DOUBLE FOUL**

Second-and-10 at A40. End A3 is legally chucked out of bounds at the A43. A3 immediately reestablishes at the A48 and leaps in an attempt to catch the pass. The pass goes off of A3's fingers and, while A3 is defenseless, B3 launches and hits A3 helmet-to-helmet as the pass falls incomplete.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on A40. Illegal touch of a forward pass and unnecessary roughness. Illegal touching of a forward pass by an eligible receiver who has been out of bounds is not a five-yard penalty, (loss of down only, so not a simple 5), so 5 vs. 15 enforcement does not apply. The penalties offset and the down is replayed.

**A.R. 14.56 DOUBLE DEAD BALL FOULS—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Second-and-10 on B30. One minute and twenty-five seconds remain in the game, and Team B is ahead 17-14. The clock is running, and Team A hurries to the ball, but A3 false starts. B1 comes across the line and body slams A1.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on B30. False start and unnecessary roughness. There is no 5 vs. 15 enforcement, because the false start is not a "simple 5" due to the 10-second runoff portion of the foul. However, in this situation, since the penalties offset, there is no 10-second runoff, and the clock starts on the snap.

**A.R. 14.57 DOUBLE DEAD BALL FOULS—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Second-and-10 on B30. One minute and twenty-five seconds remain in the game, and Team A is ahead 17-14 with the clock running. Team A comes to the line, and B2 encroaches by making contact with Guard A2. A2 takes exception and body slams B2.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on B30. Encroachment and unnecessary roughness. There is no 5 vs. 15 enforcement because the encroachment is not a "simple 5", as this foul would require the play clock to be set to 40 seconds. However, in this situation, since there is a double foul, the play clock is set to 25 seconds, and the clock starts on the snap.

**A.R. 14.58 TEAM B LIVE BALL PERSONAL FOUL—TEAM A DELAY OF GAME AT END OF PLAY**

Second-and-10 on A20. During A2's run, B1 grabs center A3's mask and pulls him to the ground. A2 runs to the (a) 50; or (b) A37. In celebration, A2 (while still on the ground, or after getting up) forcibly spikes the ball away from players in the field of play.

**Rulings:**

- (a) First-and-10 on A45. Facemask and delay of game. Team A has the option to decline the foul by B1 (which would be 5 vs. 15 enforcement, here) and allow their delay-of-game penalty to be enforced from the dead ball spot.
- (b) First-and-10 on A35. Facemask and delay-of-game. Team A's better option here is to accept 5 vs.15 enforcement. (14-5-1-Exc. 1).

**Note:** When there is a double foul, and Team A's only foul is a dead ball spike delay-of- game at the end of the play, Team A has the option whether to accept normal double foul enforcement, (replay the down, or 5 vs. 15 enforcement, if appropriate), or instead decline Team B's foul and just have their dead ball spike delay-of-game penalty enforced.

**A.R. 14.59 DOUBLE DEAD BALL FOULS—AFTER TWO-MINUTE WARNING**

Third-and-5 on B45. With 15 seconds left in a tied game, A1 scrambles to the B20 where he is tackled by B1, who continues to lie on top of A1, preventing him from getting off the ground. A2 then grabs B1's facemask and pulls him off the pile to allow A1 to get up.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B20. Delay of game defense and unnecessary roughness offense. Dead ball fouls by both teams offset at the succeeding spot. There is no 5 vs.15 enforcement for dead ball fouls at the end of a play. The clock starts on the snap.

**A.R. 14.60 ONSIDE KICK—DOUBLE FOUL—TEAM A RECOVERS KICK BEYOND 10 YARDS**

On an onside kick from the A35, A1 pooches the ball directly up into the air. B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal at the 50, where A2 contacts him before the ball arrives. A2 recovers the ball at the B45.

**Ruling:** Re-kick A35. Invalid fair catch signal and interference with the opportunity to catch a kick. There was no change of possession, but an invalid signal is a spot foul, so 5 vs.15 enforcement does not apply.

**A.R. 14.61 TEAM B LIVE BALL FOUL—TEAM A FOUL BETWEEN DOWNS**

Third-and-10 on A40. At the snap, B1 is offside. Quarterback A1 throws a pass to A2 and the pass is ruled incomplete. End A2 takes off his helmet and argues with the Back Judge.

**Ruling:** Third-and-20 on A30. Defense offside and dead ball unsportsmanlike conduct. Both fouls are enforced separately as the unsportsmanlike foul against an official is treated as a foul between downs. (It also counts toward a disqualification for two such qualifying fouls in the game).

**Note:** If the official had flagged A2 for simply taking his helmet off (rather than arguing with an official), the unsportsmanlike conduct foul would combine with the offside penalty to create a 5 vs.15 enforcement.

**A.R. 14.62 TEAM A SIGNALS FOR TIMEOUT WHEN NOT PERMITTED—PLAY IS RUN—TEAM B PERSONAL FOUL**

Second-and-12 on B40. Team A is out of timeouts, but after all 11 players get set, A1 turns and asks the Referee for a timeout. The Referee ignores the request. A1 gets set again and takes the snap. He hands off to back A2 who runs out of bounds at the B36 where B2 hits him late.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B21. Unnecessary roughness. There is no foul for delay of game since the officials did not grant A1's request. The late hit is enforced per normal rules.

- A.R. 14.63 TEAM A SIGNALS FOR TIMEOUT WHEN NOT PERMITTED—GRANTED—TEAM B PERSONAL FOUL**  
Second-and-12 on B40. Team A is out of timeouts, but after all 11 players get set, A1 turns and asks the Referee for a timeout who incorrectly grants it. Immediately following the whistle, B4 knocks center A8 to the ground.  
**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B25. Delay of game and unnecessary roughness. When the officials grant a timeout request from a team that is not legally permitted to take one, it is a penalty for delay of game. The unnecessary roughness by B4 combines with the delay of game to create a 5 vs. 15 enforcement. If this occurred after the two-minute warning, with the clock running, the delay of game would not be a simple 5 because it would include a 10-second runoff. In that case, the fouls would offset at the previous spot.

#### **FOULS PRIOR TO A CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

- A.R. 14.64 FOUL PRIOR TO FUMBLE—DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. B1 catches the punt on the B25 and runs to the B35 where he fumbles. During B1's run (before the fumble), B2 blocks A3 low at the B37. A2 recovers the fumble at the B34 and runs to the B33 where he fumbles, and B2 recovers and is downed at the B30.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B19. Low block. Enforce the low block foul from the spot of A2's recovery, and give the ball back to Team A.

- A.R. 14.65 FOUL PRIOR TO FUMBLE—DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. B1 catches the punt on the B25 and runs to the B35 where he fumbles. During B1's run: (a), B2 blocks A3 low at the B37; or b) B3 blocks A5 in the back at the B37. A2 recovers the fumble at the B34 and runs to the B33 where he fumbles, and A3 recovers and is downed at the B30.  
**Rulings:**  
(a) A's ball, first-and-10 on B15. B2's low block is carried over the change of possession and enforced from the dead ball spot, since Team A never lost possession after recovering B1's fumble.  
(b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B30. Decline illegal block above the waist. Only personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls can be carried over the change of possession.

- A.R. 14.66 PERSONAL FOUL PRIOR TO DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. B1 catches the punt on the B25 and runs to the B35 where he fumbles. During B1's run, A3 pulls and twists B2's facemask at the B37. A2 recovers the fumble at the B34 and runs to the B33 where he fumbles, and B2 recovers and is downed at the B30.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Facemask. Because this is a foul on a run before a change of possession, Team B has the option to enforce the foul from the spot of its fumble; see 14-4-3. Because Team B has possession at the end of the down and there are no other fouls, the foul can also be enforced from the dead ball spot. (14-2-4).

- A.R. 14.67 PERSONAL FOUL BY EITHER TEAM PRIOR TO DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION**  
Third-and-10 on A40. A1 runs to the B24 where he fumbles. B1 recovers at the B20, runs to the B40 and fumbles. A2 recovers at the B40. During A1's run, at the B22: (a) B2 pulls A2 by the mask; or (b) A3 clips B3.  
**Rulings:**  
(a) A's ball, first-and-10 on B12. Facemask. This is a foul on a run before a change of possession, so the foul can be enforced from the spot of A1's fumble. Because Team A has possession at the end of the down and there are no other fouls, it would also have the option to enforce the foul from the dead ball spot. (14-2-4).  
(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Clipping. Enforce from the spot of B's recovery.

- A.R. 14.68 PUNT—TEAM B PERSONAL FOUL PRIOR TO DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. B1 catches the punt on the B25 and runs to the B35 where he fumbles. Either at the snap, or during the punt, B3 pulls A3 down by the facemask. A2 recovers the fumble at the B30.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Facemask. Because Team A has possession at the end of the down and there are no other fouls, the foul can be enforced from the dead ball spot. (14-2-4).

- A.R. 14.69 PUNT—TEAM A PERSONAL FOUL PRIOR TO DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION**  
Fourth-and-10 on A40. B1 catches the punt on the B25 and runs to the B35 where he fumbles. A2 recovers the fumble and is downed at the B30. Either at the snap, or during the punt, A3 pulls B3 down by the facemask.  
**Ruling:** Fourth-and-25 on A25. Facemask. Previous spot enforcement.

#### **DOUBLE FOULS WITH A CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

- A.R. 14.70 KICKOFF—TEAM A FOUL BEFORE CHANGE—TEAM B FOUL AFTER CHANGE**  
On the opening kickoff, kicking-team player A3 lines up with his foot behind the B40-yard line. Receiver B2 catches the ball in the end zone and runs it back to the A35. On the runback, B3 blocks low on the A26.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on 50 or re-kick A35. This is a double foul with a change of possession, A3 illegal formation, and B3 illegally blocking below the waist. Team B would likely decline the illegal formation foul and have their low block foul enforced from the dead ball spot rather than re-kick.

- A.R. 14.71 KICKOFF—DOUBLE FOUL—KICKOFF OUT OF BOUNDS—TEAM B LOW BLOCK DURING KICK**  
A's kickoff from the A35 rolls out of bounds on the B10 after last touching A1. B1 had blocked A2 low at the B15 before the kickoff went out of bounds.  
**Ruling:** Re-kick A35. Kickoff out of bounds and an illegal low block. Since both fouls happened during the kick, the fouls offset and there must be a re-kick.

- A.R. 14.72 KICKOFF—DOUBLE FOUL—TEAM B FOUL IN FIELD OF PLAY/END ZONE AFTER CHANGE**  
A1 is in an illegal formation on the kickoff from the A35. B1 catches the ball in end zone and runs to B15. During the run, B2 clips: (a) on B6; or (b) in B's end zone.  
**Rulings:**  
(a) Re-kick A35, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. Illegal formation and Clipping.  
(b) Re-kick A35. This is a double foul with a change of possession, and since the enforcement of B2's foul would be a safety, the down is replayed.
- A.R. 14.73 KICKOFF OUT OF BOUNDS OR NOT REACHING LANDING ZONE—DEAD BALL FOUL BY TEAM B**  
Kickoff from the A35, and after the ball goes out of bounds or lands at the B22, B1 knocks down A2 from behind.  
**Ruling:** Re-kick A35, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B11. Kickoff out of bounds or short of the landing zone and personal foul unnecessary roughness. This is a double foul with a change of possession, so A's foul would be declined, and enforcement of B's foul would be from the dead ball spot. Team B would therefore likely choose to replay the down.
- A.R. 14.74 PUNT—TEAM A FOULS DURING PUNT—TEAM B FOULS AFTER SCORING**  
Fourth-and-5 on A28. A1: (a) holds; or (b) clips prior to a punt. B1 catches the kick at the B30 and runs for a touchdown. B2 clips after B1 scores.  
**Rulings:**  
(a) Touchdown Team B. Clean hands score. The clipping foul is enforced on the Try. Team A's offensive holding is declined. Team B has the option to choose from which Try spot the penalty will be enforced.  
(b) Touchdown Team B. Kickoff B35. Clean hands score. Team A's major foul will bridge, and the double fouls automatically offset at the succeeding spot; there are no enforcement options for either team.
- A.R. 14.75 PUNT—TEAM A MAJOR FOUL DURING PUNT —TEAM B FOULS DURING RETURN**  
Fourth-and-5 on A45. A1 clips prior to a punt. B1 catches the kick at the B5 and runs to the B20. B2 holds during the return (a) at the B10 or (b) in the end zone.  
**Rulings:**  
(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B10 or A's ball, fourth-and-5 on A45. This is a double foul with a change of possession. In this situation, Team A's major foul bridges and offsets with Team B's foul at the spot it would be enforced if it were the only foul. Team B also has the option to replay the down when a double foul with a change of possession happens during a kick play.  
(b) A's ball, fourth-and-5 on A45. If Team B's foul would create a safety during a down in which there is a double foul with a change of possession, the down is replayed at the previous spot.  
  
*Note: Although the Team A foul bridges the change of possession and offsets with the Team B foul, it is still considered a double foul with a change of possession. This is an important distinction as compared to a double foul after a change of possession, because all other aspects of a double/foul would still be in effect here (extension of a period, replay option on a kick play, and automatic replay if Team B foul creates a safety).*
- A.R. 14.76 PUNT—BOTH TEAMS FOUL PRIOR TO THE KICK—KICK IS BLOCKED**  
Fourth-and-10 on 50. At the snap, A5 grabs and twists B5's facemask. B1 was offside and gets through to block the punt. The ball is recovered at the A45 by: (a) A2; or (b) B2.  
**Rulings:**  
(a) Fourth-and-10 on 50. Facemask and defense offside. Team A's failure to make a first down on the fourth down play, is a "change of possession" that eliminates 5 vs.15 enforcement.  
(b) Fourth-and-10 on 50. Facemask and defense offside. Double foul, and B's foul is not a post-possession foul. There is no 5 vs.15 enforcement because of the change of possession when Team B recovered the punt.
- A.R. 14.77 TEAM A FOUL—CHANGE OF POSSESSION—TEAM B LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL FOUL**  
Second-and-10 on A35. A1 is offside. B1 intercepts the pass and runs to the A20. B2 clipped on A30: (a) during the runback; or (b) after B1 was downed (dead ball foul).  
**Rulings:**  
(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Offense offside and clipping. (14-5-2)  
(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on A35. Offense offside and unnecessary roughness.
- A.R. 14.78 TEAM A FOUL—CHANGE OF POSSESSION—TEAM B FOUL IN FIELD OF PLAY/END ZONE**  
Third-and-10 on B40. A1 is offside. B1 intercepts the pass on the B4 and runs to B30. During the run, B2 held: (a) on B10; or (b) in B's end zone.  
**Rulings:**  
(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B5. Offense offside before the interception, and offensive holding after the change of possession. There is no option to replay the down on a non-kicking play.  
(b) Third-and-10 on B40. Replay the down. If enforcement of Team B's foul on a double foul with a change of possession results in a Safety, the down is replayed.
- A.R. 14.79 FIELD GOAL—TEAM A FOUL AT SNAP—TEAM B FOUL DURING KICK—CHANGE OF POSSESSION**  
Fourth-and-3 on B28. Team A attempts a field goal from the B36 that is short. B1 picks up the ball at the B6 and returns it to the B40. While the ball was rolling, B2 clipped at the B8. At the snap, A2 was in an illegal formation.  
**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B3, or A's ball, fourth-and-3 on B28. B2's foul is a post-possession foul with clean

hands. Since this is a kick play, Team B has the option to enforce its foul or replay the down. There is no option for 5 vs. 15 enforcement due to the change of possession.

## **DOUBLE FOULS AFTER A CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

### **A.R. 14.80 DOUBLE FOUL AFTER A CHANGE - FUMBLE**

First-and-10 on B45. A1's pass is intercepted by B1, and during the interception return, A2 grabs and twists B1's facemask at the B25, which causes B1 to fumble the ball at the B30. During the fumble, B2 blocks low at the B35. B1 then recovers the ball at the B40.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. This is a double foul after a change of possession, (the interception), so the fouls offset at the spot where Team B's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. Since B2's low block occurred during a loose ball, these fouls offset at the spot of the fumble, as that is behind the spot of the foul. Had Team A recovered the fumble, this would be a double foul with a double change of possession, and the down would be replayed, because Team A did not get the ball with clean hands.

### **A.R. 14.81 PUNT—DOUBLE FOUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-7 on A22. A2 punts the ball to B1 who catches the punt at the B35. B1 is tackled by the facemask at the 50. During the return, B5 clips at the: (a) B40 or (b) A45.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. The fouls offset at the spot where Team B's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul, which is the spot of Team B's foul here, because that is less advantageous to Team B than the dead ball spot.
- (b) B's ball, first-and 10 on the 50. The fouls offset at the spot where Team B's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul, which is the dead ball spot here, because that is less advantageous to Team B than the spot of B5's foul.

*Note: When Team B's foul is not a post possession foul, the end of the kick is irrelevant for enforcement purposes on a double foul after a change of possession.*

### **A.R. 14.82 PUNT—DOUBLE FOUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. During A1's punt, B1 commits an illegal block in the back at the B20. B2 catches the punt at the B10 and returns it to the B40, where A1 tackles B2 by the facemask.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 at B10. The double/after enforcement spot is the spot where Team B's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. Since B's foul is a post possession foul, the enforcement spot is either the end of the kick or the spot of B's foul. The illegal block above the waist and the facemask therefore offset at the end of the kick, as that is the least advantageous spot for Team B.

### **A.R. 14.83 PUNT—KICK ENDS IN END ZONE—DOUBLE FOUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-6 on B38. During A1's punt, B2 blocks A2 low at the B18. The ball lands at the B8, B3 muffs the ball at the B6, and it rolls into the end zone. B2 recovers the ball and runs to the B31 where A8 tackles him by the facemask.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B18. Since B's foul on this double/after play is a post possession foul, B's low block and A's facemask offset at the end of the kick, or the spot of B's foul, whichever is least advantageous to Team B. Since the end of the kick is the end zone and would result in a touchback, the end of the kick is deemed to be the B20. The spot of B's foul at the B18 is therefore used as the enforcement spot.

### **A.R. 14.84 INVALID FAIR CATCH SIGNAL—LEGAL/LATE HIT ON SIGNALER**

Fourth-and-8 on A40. B1 gives an invalid fair catch signal at the B15 and catches the ball at the B17: (a) A3 tackles B1 at the B17; or (b) A3 strikes B1 in the head after he makes the catch at B17.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B10. Invalid fair catch signal enforced at the spot of the foul. No foul by A3.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Double foul after a change of possession. The invalid fair catch signal and unnecessary roughness offset at the B15, because Team B's foul is a spot foul, so that would be the enforcement spot for B1's foul, if that was the only foul on the play.

### **A.R. 14.85 PUNT—LIVE BALL AND DEAD BALL FOULS—DOUBLE FOUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-14 on A31. A1's punt is fielded by B3 at the B15 and returned to the B23. During the punt, B4 holds A5 at the B20. Immediately after the ball is dead at the B23, a scuffle ensues, and A7 hits B7 in the facemask. Unnecessary roughness is called.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B15. The live ball offensive holding by B4 is a post-possession foul, so it is treated as happening after the change of possession. It combines with the dead ball unnecessary roughness foul by A7, creating a double foul after a change of possession. The penalties therefore offset at the spot where B4's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul - the spot of B's foul or the end of the kick, whichever is least advantageous to Team B.

### **A.R. 14.86 PUNT—TEAM B SCORES—DOUBLE FOUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Fourth-and-10 on A7. The punt is partially blocked, and B1 recovers on the A22 and runs for a touchdown. Prior to the score, B2 holds in A's end zone. After the score, A3 grabs B1's facemask and throws him to the ground.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on A1. The live ball offensive holding by B2, combines with the dead ball unnecessary roughness foul by A3, and the penalties offset at the A1. Since the spot of B's foul and the dead ball spot are both in A's end zone, the enforcement of B2's foul would be from the goal line, if that was the only foul; the ball is therefore spotted on the 1-yard line.

**A.R. 14.87 INTERCEPTION—MOMENTUM—DOUBLE FOUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Second-and-6 on B14. B1 intercepts the pass on the B2, and momentum carries him into the end zone where he attempts to advance. A1 trips B1 which causes B1 to go to the ground in the end zone. B2 grabs and twists A1's facemask after B1 is down.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B2. The tripping and unnecessary roughness offset at the spot where B2's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. Here, that would be the spot of B's foul or the dead ball spot, whichever is least advantageous to Team B. Due to the momentum play, the dead ball spot is the B2, and since B's foul was a dead ball foul, its enforcement spot would be the dead ball spot, the B2.

**A.R. 14.88 INTERCEPTION—END ZONE—DOUBLE FOUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Third-and-5 on B22. B1 intercepts a pass in B's end zone and attempts to run the ball out, but during the run, B2 holds in the end zone where B1 is downed. A3 piles on B1 after the tackle.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B1. The offensive holding and dead ball unnecessary roughness offset at the spot where Team B's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. Here, since the result of the play is a touchback, the dead ball spot is deemed to be the B20. However, B's foul is behind that spot, and since B fouls in the end zone and runs with the ball, the enforcement of B's live ball foul in the end zone would be a safety. The fouls therefore offset at the B1.

**A.R. 14.89 INTERCEPTION—END ZONE—DOUBLE FOUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Second-and-10 on B30. B1 intercepts the ball in the end zone, runs, and is tackled in the end zone. During the run, B2 clips at the B7, and A2 tackles B1 by the facemask.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B7. Since the result of the play was a touchback, the dead ball spot is deemed to be the B20. The spot of B's foul was behind that spot, so the fouls offset at the spot of B's foul.

**A.R. 14.90 INTERCEPTION—END ZONE—DOUBLE FOUL WITH/AFTER CHANGE**

Third-and-Five on B15. B1 intercepts A1's pass in the end zone, tries to run it out, but is tackled in the end zone. During B1's run: (a) B2 pulled A7 down by the facemask at the B3, and A8 grabbed and twisted B1's facemask in the end zone. Back A4 was illegally in motion at the snap; (b) B6 blocked A6 low at the B4. Team A had six players on the line of scrimmage at the snap; (c) B5 clipped A5 at the B4, and B5 was upset with the call, so he threw the Field Judge's flag into the air.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. The double foul after the change takes precedence over the double foul with a change. The facemask fouls by both teams offset at the spot where B's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. Since the result of the play is a touchback, the dead ball spot is deemed to be the B20, so the fouls offset at the spot of B's foul, as that is behind the dead ball spot. The foul for illegal motion is declined by rule.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B2. Illegal formation by Team A, followed by a low block by B6 after the interception, results in a double foul with a change. Since B's foul occurred inside the B20, it is enforced from the spot of the foul. There is no option to replay the down because this is not a kick play.
- (c) B's ball, first-and-11 on B1. Both the clipping and unsportsmanlike conduct are enforced since a foul against an official is considered a foul between downs. The clip is enforced from the B4 to the B2, the chains are set, and then the unsportsmanlike conduct foul is enforced from the B2 to the B1. (Throwing the flag in the air is not a disqualifying foul).

**A.R. 14.91 DOUBLE FOUL WITH / AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION—TEAM B'S IMPETUS**

Fourth-and-10 on A43. The punt is rolling on the ground at the B4 when B1 bats the loose ball backward into his end zone, thinking he can create a touchback. (a) In the scramble for the ball in the end zone, A7 and B2 grab and twist each other's facemasks, after which B3 downs the ball in the end zone; (b) B2 picks up the ball and is running with it in the end zone, when A7 and B2 grab and twist each other's facemasks. B2 is then tackled in the end zone; or (c) in the scramble for the ball in the end zone, B2 grabs and twists A7's facemask, after which B2 recovers and downs the ball in the end zone. A3 then piles on.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Fourth-and-10 on A43. Replay the down. This is a double foul with a change of possession, because A7's foul is before the change, and B2's foul is post possession, thus treated as after the change. Since Team B's impetus put the ball in the end zone, and B then fouled there, the enforcement of B2's foul would create a safety; therefore, by rule, the down is replayed.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B1. This is a double foul after a change of possession. Team B's impetus, (bat), put the ball in the end zone, after which both teams fouled in the end zone. Team B's foul would be enforced from the end zone resulting in a safety, if it was the only foul. The fouls therefore offset at the B1.
- (c) Safety, safety kick B20. This is a clean hands score. The bat is legal, but it creates new impetus, resulting in a safety when B downs the ball in its end zone. Team A has clean hands at the time of the score, so the score counts, and A7's personal foul is enforced on the safety kick. B2's personal foul on the scoring play also bridges to the safety kick, where both fouls offset.

**A.R. 14.92 DOUBLE AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION—TEAM B'S IMPETUS**

Third-and-2 on B8. A1 runs to the B5 and fumbles. B1 bats the loose ball backward into his end zone. B2 picks up the ball there and runs to the B17 where he is tackled by the facemask. During B2's run, B3 blocks low at the B10.

**Ruling:** B's ball, First-and-10 on B10. This is a double foul after a change of possession. The low block and facemask fouls offset at the spot of B's foul, as that is behind the dead ball spot. The bat by B1 is legal.

**A.R. 14.93 INTERCEPTION—DOUBLE WITH/DOUBLE AFTER FOULS**

First-and-10 on 50. Illegal motion by A1, and the pass is intercepted by B1 at the B20. On the return, B2 commits an illegal block in the back at the B30, and A2 tackles B1 by the facemask at the B40.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. Illegal motion prior to the interception, followed by an illegal block in the back and a personal foul facemask. The double foul after a change takes precedence over the double foul with a change, and the fouls offset at the spot of B's foul, as that is behind the dead ball spot and would be the enforcement spot if the only foul was B's foul. A's illegal motion foul is declined by rule. **If the foul by Team A before the change of possession had been a major foul, the enforcement options would be the same. There is no option to replay the down for a double foul with a change during a non-kicking play.**

**A.R. 14.94 KICKOFF—DOUBLE WITH / DOUBLE AFTER—OPTION TO REPLAY**

Team A is in an illegal formation on the kickoff from the A35. Team B catches the ball at the B15, and during the return, B2 clips at the B45 and is tackled at the B37. A1 piles on.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B37, or Team B has the option to replay the down. The double foul after a change takes precedence over the double foul with a change, so the fouls offset at the spot where Team B's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. On this play, that is the dead ball spot, which is behind the spot of B's foul. Since this is a kicking play and there is also a double foul with a change, Team B also has the option to require a re-kick from the A35.

**A.R. 14.95 KICKOFF OUT OF BOUNDS OR NOT REACHING LANDING ZONE—DEAD BALL FOULS BY BOTH TEAMS**

Kickoff from the A35 goes out of bounds **or hits the ground at the B24**, after which A1 and B2 commit dead ball fouls.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B24 or Team B has the option to replay the down. This is a double foul with a change and a double foul after a change. The double after takes precedence and is enforced from the spot where B's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. Here, that is the dead ball spot, which is also the spot of the foul. Since there is also a foul by Team A before the change of possession creating a double foul with a change on a kicking play, Team B also has the option to require a re-kick from the A35. There is not an option to offset the dead ball fouls at the B40.

**A.R. 14.96 DOUBLE FOUL WITH/AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION—END ZONE INVOLVEMENT**

Third-and-Five on B15. B1 intercepts A1's pass in the end zone, tries to run it out, but is tackled in the end zone. A4 was illegally in motion at the snap. During B1's run, (a) B6 blocked A6 low at the B4; or (b) B2 pulled A7 down by the facemask at the B3, and A8 grabbed and twisted B1's facemask in the end zone.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B2. Double foul with a change. By rule, the illegal formation prior to the change is declined, and B's low block is enforced from the spot of the foul, since it occurred inside the B20 (which is deemed to be the dead ball spot).
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B3. The double foul after a change takes precedence over the double foul with a change, so A's illegal motion penalty is declined by rule. Since the result of the play is a touchback, the dead ball spot is deemed to be the B20. The facemask penalties offset at the spot where B's foul would be enforced if it was the only foul. Here, that is the spot of B's foul, since that spot is behind the dead ball spot.

**DOUBLE FOUL WITH DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

**A.R. 14.97 KICKOFF—DOUBLE FOUL—DOUBLE CHANGE**

On a kickoff from the A35, A1 is in an illegal formation. B1 picks up the ball at B10, runs to the A25, fumbles, and A2 recovers the ball there. During B1's run, B2 clipped at the A35.

**Ruling:** Re-kick A35. Illegal formation and clipping. This is a double foul with a double change of possession, and the last team in possession was not clean prior to recovering the ball. Therefore, the down must be replayed.

**A.R. 14.98 DOUBLE FOUL—DOUBLE CHANGE**

First-and-10 on 50. Illegal motion by A1 and offside by B1. B2 intercepts, and during the return, B5 clips. B2 then fumbles the ball back to A2.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Illegal motion and defense offside prior to the interception and clipping by B5 during the return. The double foul before the change of possession requires a replay, because the team last in possession did not get it with clean hands.

**A.R. 14.99 DOUBLE FOUL—DOUBLE CHANGE**

First-and-10 on 50. Illegal motion by A1, and B1 then intercepts the pass. On B's runback, B2 clips. B1 then fumbles and A2 recovers.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Replay the down. Illegal motion by Team A followed by clipping by Team B. If there are fouls by both teams and multiple changes of possession during a down, if the team last in possession did not get the ball prior to fouling, the down is replayed.

**A.R. 14.100 DOUBLE FOUL/DOUBLE CHANGE—DEAD BALL FOUL BY TEAM LAST IN POSSESSION**

Third-and-10 on B40. B1 intercepts a pass on the B10 and runs to the B20 where he fumbles. During the run, B2 holds on the B15. A1 recovers the fumble at the B22 and goes out of bounds at the B12 after which A2 roughs B2.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B27. The last team in possession, (Team A), was foul-free when they got the ball, so they will keep the ball after enforcement. Team B's foul was before the last change, and Team A's foul was after the last change, so the double foul with a change of possession will be enforced – A's dead ball unnecessary roughness penalty is enforced from the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 14.101 DOUBLE FOUL/DOUBLE CHANGE—PLAYER DISQUALIFIED**

Second-and-10 on B40. B1 intercepts the pass on the B10 and runs to the B20. During B1's run, B2 punches A1 at the 50, and A2 tackles B2 by the mask, causing B2 to fumble and A1 recovers at the B25.

**Ruling:** A's ball, second-and-10 on B40. Since the last team in possession (Team A), was not foul-free when it recovered the ball, the unnecessary roughness and facemask offset, and the down is replayed. Disqualify B2.

**A.R. 14.102 DOUBLE FOUL/DOUBLE CHANGE**

First-and-10 on 50. B1 intercepts on the B20. B1 fumbles, and A1 recovers and runs with the ball. A2 (a) holds, **or (b) blocks below the waist during the run.** A1 fumbles, and B2 recovers, runs, and is tackled at the A40. During B2's run, B3 blocks below the waist at the 50.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. Team B got possession with clean hands, so it retains possession after enforcement of the double foul with a change of possession. Team A's offensive hold is declined by rule, and Team B's block below the waist penalty is enforced from the spot of the foul.

**(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on 50. This is also a double foul with a change of possession. However, because Team A's foul was a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct, it bridges over the change of possession and the fouls offset at the spot Team B's foul would be enforced if it were the only foul.**

**FOULS AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

**A.R. 14.103 TEAM A'S IMPETUS AND TEAM A'S FOUL**

First-and-10 on 50. B1 intercepts a pass in his own end zone where he is tackled. During B1's run in the end zone, (a) A2 blocks B2 below the waist; or (b) A2 trips B2, in the field of play or in the end zone.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B35.

(b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B35. When the result of the play is a touchback, the enforcement spot for all fouls by Team A, (personal fouls or otherwise), is the 20-yard line.

**A.R. 14.104 TEAM B'S IMPETUS—TEAM A FOUL**

First-and-10 on 50. B1 intercepts on the B8, scrambles, and carries the ball into his own end zone where he is tackled (not momentum exception). During the run, A2 blocks low anywhere.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Since the result of the play would be a safety because Team B's impetus put the ball in their own end zone, A2's foul is enforced from the goal line. (14-4-4)

**A.R. 14.105 INTERCEPTION—TEAM B RUNS AND FOULS IN END ZONE**

First-and-10 on 50. B1 intercepts in the end zone and runs with the ball. B2 clips in the end zone during the run. B1 is downed in the end zone or field of play.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick B20. Since Team A's impetus put the ball in the end zone, the result of the play is not a safety. The foul that occurred in the end zone during B1's run is used to create the safety, so no yardage is enforced on the safety kick.

**A.R. 14.106 INTERCEPTION—TEAM B RUNS AND FOULS IN FIELD OF PLAY**

First-and-10 on 50. B1 intercepts in the end zone and runs with the ball. B2 clips in the field of play at the B16 during the run. B1 is downed in the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B8. The clipping foul is enforced from the spot of the foul since that spot is behind the B20 (touchback spot).

**A.R. 14.107 INTERCEPTION—NO ATTEMPT TO ADVANCE—DEAD BALL FOUL**

First-and-10 on 50. B1 intercepts at the B16 and is downed immediately with no return. B2 clips in the end zone or field of play after B1 was downed.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B8. The dead ball unnecessary roughness is enforced from the succeeding spot.

**A.R. 14.108 INTERCEPTION IN END ZONE AND ADVANCE—TEAM B FOUL IN FIELD OF PLAY**

First-and-10 on 50. B1 intercepts in the end zone and runs with the ball. B2 clips in the field of play at the B16 during the run. B1 is downed in the field of play at the B25.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B8. The clipping foul is enforced from the spot of the foul since that spot is behind the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 14.109 PUNT ENDS IN END ZONE—TEAM B FOULS DURING PUNT—TACKLED IN END ZONE**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. B1 catches the punt in the end zone, runs with the ball, but is tackled in the end zone. B2 clips at the B16 while the punt is in the air.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B8. The end of the kick is the B20 (touchback), so enforcement is from the spot of the foul (B16).

**A.R. 14.110 ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTION BY TEAM B DURING SCRIMMAGE KICK**

Fourth-and-5 on A45. B1 touches A1's punt at the B5. The ball then rolls into the end zone where B1 picks it up and runs, although he is tackled in the end zone. Team B substitutes thought the play was over when the ball rolled into the end zone. Team B players started onto the field at the B35 before B1 was tackled in the end zone.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Since the punt ended in the end zone, and Team A's impetus put the ball there, B's illegal substitution at the B35 is enforced from the B20.



**A.R. 14.111 PUNT OUT OF BOUNDS—TEAM B FOUL IN END ZONE**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. A1's punt rolls out of bounds at the B16, and B2 clips in the end zone during the punt.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B8. The clipping foul is enforced from the end of the kick. The foul in the end zone is treated as though it occurred at the B20.

**A.R. 14.112 PUNT OUT OF BOUNDS—TEAM B FOUL IN FIELD OF PLAY**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. B2 clips at the B10 while the punt is in the air. The ball rolls out of bounds at the B16.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B5. The clipping foul is enforced from the spot of the foul since it was behind the end of the kick.

**A.R. 14.113 PUNT—FIRST TOUCH—TEAM B FOUL IN END ZONE**

Fourth-and-5 on A40. A1 first touches the punt on B10. B1 picks up ball at the B7 and runs to B20. B2 held A2 in Team B end zone during the run by B1.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick B20. Since the holding penalty occurred in the end zone, and B ran with the ball, the enforcement results in a safety. The enforcement of the penalty eliminates the first touch.

**A.R. 14.114 MISSED FIELD GOAL—TEAM B FOUL DURING KICK**

Fourth-and-8 on B22. A field goal attempt from the B30 is blocked at the B28, and the ball bounces to the B12 where it rolls out of bounds. Before the ball went out of bounds, B3 clipped A2 at the B15.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B6. The clipping foul is clearly not committed in an attempt to block the kick, so it is a post-possession foul enforced from the end of the kick.

**A.R. 14.115 MISSED FIELD GOAL—TEAM B FOUL DURING KICK**

Fourth-and-8 on B22. A field goal attempt from the B30 is blocked at the B28, and the ball rolls out of bounds in B's end zone. Before the ball went out of bounds, B3 clipped A2 at the B16.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B8. The clipping foul is a post possession foul enforced from the spot of the foul. On a field goal attempt, if Team B touches the kick anywhere beyond the line of scrimmage, if a Team B foul on the play is accepted, or if the kick is recovered by either team behind the line of scrimmage, Team B loses the option to go back to the spot of the kick (or the 20-yard line).

**SCORING PLAYS**

**A.R. 14.116 TOUCHDOWN—DEAD BALL FOUL**

First-and-10 on 50. Runner A1 crosses B's goal line after which: (a) A2 commits a personal foul; or (b) B1 commits a personal foul.

**Rulings:**

In both (a) and (b), the personal foul will be enforced on the Try.

**A.R. 14.117 INTERCEPTION—TEAM B FOUL BEFORE AND AFTER TOUCHDOWN**

First-and-10 on 50. B1 intercepts a pass at the B20 and runs for a touchdown. B2 clipped in A's end zone: (a) before; or (b) after B1 crossed the goal line.

**Rulings:**

(a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A15. The clipping foul is enforced from the goal line.

(b) Touchdown B. The dead ball foul for unnecessary roughness is enforced on the Try.

**A.R. 14.118 TEAM A FOULS AFTER TOUCHDOWN—TEAM B FOUL ON TRY**

Second-and-7 on B13. A1 scores and A2 commits a personal foul after the touchdown. The 15-yard penalty is enforced on the Try. On the successful Try kick, B2 is offside.

**Ruling:** One-point Try is good, kickoff A40, or re-Try for two points from the B12, kickoff A35. If Team A chooses to go for two points, both fouls would be enforced from the B2 yard line.

**A.R. 14.119 TOUCHDOWN—MULTIPLE FOULS BY TEAM A**

Second-and-goal on B7. A1 throws a pass to A2 in the end zone for a touchdown. A2 then spikes the ball in the face of B2 lying on the ground. A3 was illegally downfield prior to the pass.

**Ruling:** Second-and-goal on B12. Enforce the ineligible downfield foul from the previous spot. The taunting must be declined, or the score would count. This taunting foul still counts toward a potential disqualification even though it has been declined.

**A.R. 14.120 TOUCHDOWN ON LAST PLAY OF GAME**

Second-and-4 on B30. With 6 seconds left in the game, Team A trails 24-15. A1's pass is caught by A4 for a touchdown, and the game clock expires on the play.

**Ruling:** Game over Team B wins 24-21. There is no Try attempt.

**A.R. 14.121 PERSONAL FOUL BY TEAM A IN ITS END ZONE—RUN ENDS IN FIELD OF PLAY**

Third-and-8 on A4. A4 chop blocks in the end zone. A1 is then tackled on the A2.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick A20. The chop block in the end zone gives Team B the option of a safety. The penalty could also be declined resulting in fourth-and-10 on A2.

**A.R. 14.122 MULTIPLE FOULS BY TEAM A IN ITS END ZONE—RUN ENDS IN END ZONE/FIELD OF PLAY**

Third-and-8 on A4. A2 chop blocks and A3 holds. Both fouls occurred in A's end zone. A1 is tackled: (a) at the A5;

or (b) in the end zone.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Safety. Safety kick A20. Multiple fouls, so only one can be enforced, either of which gives Team B the option of a safety.
- (b) Safety. Safety kick A10. Since the result of the play is a safety, the chop block foul would bridge to the safety kick because it was not used to create the safety.

**A.R. 14.123 TOUCHDOWN—MULTIPLE LIVE/DEAD BALL FOULS BY TEAM B**

First-and-10 on B20. B1 grabs and twists runner A1's facemask, but A1 continues and scores a touchdown. Immediately after A1 crosses the goal line, B2 grabs A1's facemask and pulls him to the ground.

**Ruling:** Touchdown. Multiple fouls, only one of which is enforced. **The penalty will be enforced on the Try.**

**A.R. 14.124 TEAM B TOUCHDOWN—LIVE BALL AND FOUL BETWEEN DOWNS BY TEAM A**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. A1 punts the ball, and A2 commits interference with the opportunity at the B20. B1 picks up the ball and runs for a touchdown. Well after B1 has crossed the goal line, as B1 is running toward his bench, A1 grabs and pulls B1 by the facemask.

**Ruling:** Touchdown Team B. **Team A may enforce both penalties on the Try.** The KCI will be enforced on the Try because of the score by Team B. The unnecessary roughness foul is a foul between downs, so that will also be enforced on the Try. Disqualify A1 if appropriate.

**DEAD BALL FOULS**

**A.R. 14.125 RUN—DEAD BALL FOUL BY EITHER TEAM**

Second-and-10 on A30. A1 runs out of bounds at the A35 after which: (a) A2 clips on A30; or (b) B1 clips on A40.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, third-and-20 on A20.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Penalize dead ball fouls from the succeeding spot A35.

**A.R. 14.126 FOURTH DOWN—DOUBLE/MULTIPLE FOULS—DEAD BALL**

Fourth-and-1 on B30. Quarterback A1 is piled on by B2 after running out of bounds at the B30, after which: (a) A2 roughs B1; or (b) B1 roughs A2.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B30. The dead ball fouls offset at the succeeding spot.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Multiple dead ball fouls (14-1-3). Only one is assessed, and the down counts, giving the ball to Team B on downs.

**A.R. 14.127 FOURTH-DOWN INCOMPLETE PASS—DEAD BALL FOUL BY EITHER TEAM**

Fourth-and-8 on B12. After an incomplete forward pass: (a) B1 roughs A1; or (b) A1 roughs B1.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on B6. Unnecessary roughness against Team B is enforced from the succeeding spot, and it is first-and-10 for Team B.
- (b) B's ball, first-and-10 on B27. Unnecessary roughness against Team A is enforced from the succeeding spot, and it is first-and-10 for Team B.

**Note:** If these fouls occurred during the forward pass: (a) Team A would accept the penalty. A's ball, first-and-goal on B6; (b) Team B would accept the penalty. B's ball, first-and-10 on B27.

**A.R. 14.128 INCOMPLETE PASS—LIVE/DEAD BALL FOULS BY TEAM A**

Second-and-10 on A30. A1 grabs B1 by the facemask and throws him to the ground: (a) prior to; or (b) after an incomplete forward pass.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Second-and-25 on A15 or third-and-10 on A30. If accepted, the facemask is enforced from the previous spot.
- (b) Third-and-25 on A15. Dead ball unnecessary roughness enforced from the succeeding spot, and the down counts.

**A.R. 14.129 FAIR CATCH INTERFERENCE—DEAD BALL FOUL**

Fourth-and-10 on A10. B1 signals for a fair catch on the A45. A1 interferes at the A45 as the ball hits A1 in flight and goes out of bounds on the A43, after which: (a) A2 roughs B2; or (b) B2 roughs A2.

**Rulings:**

- (a) B's ball, first-and-10 on A28. Multiple fouls for fair catch interference and unnecessary roughness. Regardless of which foul Team B accepts, it will be enforced from the dead ball spot. If the dead ball spot was behind the spot of the foul, enforcement would be from the spot of the foul because that is more advantageous to Team B. If Team B accepts the foul for FCI, then it also has the option of a fair catch kick after enforcement.
- (b) Fourth-and-10 on A10, or B's ball, first-and-10 on B42. This is a double foul with a change of possession on a kick play, so Team B has the option of replaying the down or having its dead ball foul for unnecessary roughness enforced from the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 14.130 LIVE AND DEAD BALL FOULS—BOTH TEAMS**

Third-and-6 on B20. A1 runs out of bounds at the B14. A2 and B1 punch each other: (a) before; or (b) after A1 goes out of bounds.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, third-and-6 on B20. Replay. Disqualify A2 and B1.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-10 on B14. Disqualify A2 and B1.

**A.R. 14.131 DEAD BALL FOUL AFTER FIRST DOWN – NO CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Third-and-5 on A35. A1 runs to the 50 where he is tackled, after which, (a) A2 picks a defender off the pile, or (b) well after the play has ended, as the players are returning to their huddles, (between downs), A2 pushes B1 to the ground.

**Rulings:**

- (a) A's ball, first-and-10 on A35. If the dead ball foul occurs in the continuing action of the play, it is first-and-10 after enforcement.
- (b) A's ball, first-and-25 on A35. If the dead ball foul occurs between downs or is a foul against an official, it is enforced after the chains are set, so it is first-and-25 after enforcement.

**A.R. 14.132 FAILURE TO MAKE LINE TO GAIN ON FOURTH DOWN—TEAM B DEAD BALL FOUL**

Fourth-and-10 on 50. Quarterback A1 scrambles and is run out of bounds by B1 at the A40, after which B1 immediately taunts A1.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. The dead ball foul is enforced from the succeeding spot. The unsportsmanlike conduct foul counts toward a potential disqualification for two such fouls.

**A.R. 14.133 TEAM A FOULS IN ITS END ZONE AND THEN COMMITS DEAD BALL FOUL**

Third-and-10 on A4. A2 held in his end zone prior to an incomplete pass. A3 roughed B1 after the incompletion.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick A20 or A's ball fourth-and-12 on A2. Multiple fouls by A, and only one can be enforced.

**A.R. 14.134 SAFETY—DEAD BALL FOUL BY TEAM B**

Fourth-and-10 on A10. A1 is sacked in his own end zone, after which B1 piles on.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick A35.

**A.R. 14.135 SAFETY—LIVE BALL FOUL BY TEAM A AND DEAD BALL FOUL BY TEAM B**

Third-and-10 on A10. A2 is illegally in motion at the snap, and A1 is sacked in his own end zone. After the ball is dead, B1 piles on.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick on A35. Team B scored with clean hands, so the Team A foul is declined, and the Team B foul is enforced on the safety kick.

**A.R. 14.136 SAFETY—DEAD BALL FOUL BY TEAM B**

Fourth-and-15 on A2. Punter A1 jumps to catch the high snap and comes down on the end line. He punts and is then roughed by B1.

**Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick A35. This is a dead ball foul for unnecessary roughness (late hit), not roughing the kicker, as the ball is dead when A1 touches the end line.

**A.R. 14.137 FOURTH DOWN—FUMBLE FORWARD OUT OF BOUNDS—TEAM B DEAD BALL FOUL**

Fourth-and-1 on B30. A1 runs to the B30 and fumbles the ball forward out of bounds at the B28. B1 commits a personal foul immediately after the ball goes out of bounds.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B15. The personal foul is after the ball is out of bounds, so Team B takes over at the dead ball spot (spot of the fumble), and the dead ball foul is enforced from there.

**A.R. 14.138 2-POINT TRY—TEAM B DEAD BALL FOUL**

On a 2-point Try, A1 runs with the ball to the B1 and fumbles there. The ball rolls into the end zone where A2 recovers, and B2 piles on.

**Ruling:** Try fails. Kickoff 50. Two-minute fumble rules are in effect on a Try, so the unnecessary roughness is after the Try ends and is enforced on the kickoff.

**A.R. 14.139 SUCCESSFUL FIELD GOAL—TEAM B LIVE BALL FOUL—TEAM A DEAD BALL FOUL**

Fourth-and-goal on B5. On a field goal attempt from the B13, B1 is called for (a) leaping; or (b) holding immediately after the snap. The field goal is good. After the score, A2 then punches B1.

**Rulings:**

- (a) Field goal is good. Kickoff A35. This is a clean hands score, so both the leaping and unnecessary roughness fouls bridge and offset on the kickoff. There is no option for Team A. Disqualify A2.
- (b) Field goal is good. KO A20. "Clean hands score." Only the dead ball unnecessary roughness carries over to the kickoff. Disqualify A2.

**A.R. 14.140 TEAM B DEAD BALL FOUL BEHIND THE LINE**

Third-and-10 on A35. A1 scrambles behind the line and is finally tackled at the A10. B2 piles on after A1 is down.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on A25. This dead ball unnecessary roughness is enforced from the succeeding spot (A10).

*Note: If this had occurred on fourth down, it would have been B's ball, first-and-10 on A25. The dead ball foul is enforced after the change of possession.*

**A.R. 14.141 LAST PLAY OF HALF—FUMBLE—TEAM B DEAD BALL FOUL**

Fourth-and-4 on B18. The score is tied on the last play of the half. A's field goal attempt is blocked and the ball rolls to the B28. Kicker A2 picks up the ball, runs to the B19, and throws a pass to eligible A6 at the B15. A6 catches the pass at the B15, runs to the B5, fumbles, and: (a) A8 recovers at the B2 and scores; or (b) A6 recovers his fumble at the B4 and B8 piles on him after he is tackled.

**Rulings:**

(a) Half over. No score. A8 was not the fumbling player.

(b) Half over. Enforce B's foul for unnecessary roughness on the opening kickoff of the second half (or overtime).

**A.R. 14.142 FAILED TRY 2-POINT TRY—PERSONAL FOUL IN CONTINUING ACTION**

A1 scores on the last play of the fourth quarter to make the score 34-32 in favor of Team B. On the ensuing Try from the B2, A2 is driven out of bounds at the B½-yard line, and B2 hits him late out of bounds.

**Ruling:** Game over. Team B wins 34-32. There is no extension or enforcement of the dead ball unnecessary roughness, as it would be enforced on the kickoff. There would be no replay of the Try attempt, even if time remained on the clock.

**A.R. 14.143 RUN ENDS IN FIELD OF PLAY—MULTIPLE TEAM A FOULS AGAINST OFFICIAL**

Third-and-10 on B40. A1 runs to the B35 where he is tackled inbounds. Immediately after A1 is down, A3 screams in the face of the Down Judge that A1 was tackled by the facemask, and then A2 shoves the official.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-35 on A35. Disqualify A2. Both unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are enforced in this situation, as a foul against an official is always enforced as a foul between downs. The foul by A3 counts toward a disqualification, if he commits another foul of this type.

**A.R. 14.144 MULTIPLE FOULS—BY TEAM B—LIVE BALL/FOUL AGAINST OFFICIAL**

Third-and-10 on B40. B1 commits pass interference at the B28. Right after the play, B1 is angry about the foul and throws his helmet down at the ground in the direction of the official.

**Ruling:** First-and-10 on B14. Disqualify B1. The foul against the official is treated as a foul between downs, so both the defensive pass interference and unsportsmanlike conduct are enforced.

**A.R. 14.145 DOUBLE FOUL—TEAM A LIVE BALL FOUL—TEAM B DEAD BALL FOUL**

Second-and-10 on B40. A1 drops back to pass. A2 holds B1 while pass blocking. A1 passes complete to A3 at the B30 and he is tackled either inbounds or out of bounds, after which B2 piles on.

**Ruling:** Second-and-10 on B40. Replay the down. The offensive holding and dead ball personal foul offset.

*Note: Live ball fouls combine with dead ball fouls to create double fouls.*

**A.R. 14.146 DOUBLE FOUL—TEAM B LIVE BALL FOUL—DEAD BALL FOULS BY BOTH TEAMS**

First-and-10 on A20. Back A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B20 where he is tackled. During A2's run, B6 pulls A6's facemask at the B10. After the play, A2 shoves B4 and B4 shoves A2 (both actions are unnecessary roughness).

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A20. Replay the down. The live ball facemask combines with the dead ball personal foul to create a double foul. There is no option to decline the live ball facemask and offset the dead ball unnecessary roughness fouls at the dead ball spot.

**A.R. 14.147 MULTIPLE FOULS BY TEAM A—LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL—RUNNER MAKES FIRST DOWN**

First-and-10 on 50. A3 is illegally downfield on a forward pass. The pass is complete to A2, who is tackled inbounds at the B30. Immediately after A1 is tackled, A1 taunts B3.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-15 on A45. Multiple fouls. The ineligible downfield would be accepted. If the taunting was accepted, it would be enforced from the succeeding spot and the down would count, A's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Even though the unsportsmanlike conduct foul is declined, it still counts toward a potential disqualification for two such fouls.

**A.R. 14.148 MULTIPLE FOULS BY TEAM A—LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL**

First-and-10 on 50. Incomplete pass by A1, and offensive pass interference on the play at the B25. After the pass is incomplete, A2 roughs B2.

**Ruling:** A's ball, second-and-25 on A35. Multiple fouls. The unnecessary roughness would be accepted, as the down would count, and the offensive pass interference would be declined.

**A.R. 14.149 MULTIPLE FOULS BY TEAM B—LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL**

First-and-10 on 50. Incomplete pass by A1, and B1 commits defensive pass interference on the play at the B25. After the pass is incomplete, B2 roughs the passer.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B25. Multiple fouls. The defensive pass interference would be accepted and the roughing the passer penalty would be declined, as it would be enforced from the previous spot.

**A.R. 14.150 MULTIPLE FOULS BY TEAM B—LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL—FOURTH DOWN**

Fourth-and-15 on B40. A2 runs a draw up the middle to the B36. During the run, nose tackle B1 holds A2 at the B38 to prevent him from blocking linebacker B2. B3 piles on after the play.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B31. Multiple fouls. Since Team A did not make the line to gain, it must accept the live ball defensive hold and decline the dead ball unnecessary roughness, or it would be B's ball.

**A.R. 14.151 LIVE BALL AND FOUL BETWEEN DOWNS BY SAME TEAM**

First-and-10 on 50. A3 is illegally downfield. The pass is completed to A2 who either runs out of bounds or is tackled inbounds at the B30. As the referee begins his announcement for the ineligible receiver downfield, A2 taunts B1.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-30 on A30. The ineligible receiver downfield is enforced, and the significant delay after the play ends and before the dead ball taunting, permits both fouls to be enforced. The unsportsmanlike conduct foul counts toward a potential disqualification for two such fouls.

**A.R. 14.152 MULTIPLE FOULS BY TEAM A—LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL—TOUCHDOWN**

Third-and-5 on B10. As quarterback A1 drops back to pass, A2 holds B1 at the line of scrimmage. A1 subsequently completes a pass to A3 in the end zone for a touchdown. Running back A4, in his excitement, runs into the end zone to congratulate A3 and takes off his helmet in the process. The Field Judge throws a flag for UNS.

**Ruling:** Third-and-15 on B20. Team B must accept the offensive holding and decline the unsportsmanlike conduct to negate the touchdown.

**MISCELLANEOUS PLAYS**

**A.R. 14.153 FOUL BETWEEN HALVES OR BEFORE OVERTIME**

At the end of the first half, or at the end of regulation time of a game going into overtime, one of the coaches or players argues with, and shoves, an official.

**Ruling:** Unsportsmanlike conduct fouls between halves, or between the end of the regulation game and overtime, are assessed on the kickoff at the start of the second half or overtime. Disqualify the coach or player involved, if appropriate.

**A.R. 14.154 TEAM A PLAYER PUNCHES OPPONENT DURING THE PLAY**

Third-and-10 on A10. A1 is downed on A16. During the run, A2 punches B1 at the A12.

**Ruling:** Fourth-and-4 on A16, or third-and-14 on A6. Disqualify A2. A2 is disqualified regardless of whether the unnecessary roughness penalty is accepted or declined.

**A.R. 14.155 TOUCHDOWN—ENFORCEMENT OF MAJOR FOULS BY BOTH TEAMS**

Third-and-10 on A30. While A1 is running with the ball at the B25, B1 grabs and pulls his facemask. A1 scores on the play. (a) After A1 crosses the goal line, A1 shoves B1, knocking him to the ground or (b) well after A1 has crossed the goal line, and as A1 is running toward his bench, A1 shoves B1, knocking him to the ground.

**Rulings:**

- (a) These fouls happened on the play and in the continuing action after the play, so they offset after the play, and neither team has the option to enforce on the Try. (This is a clean-hands score.)
- (b) The first foul happened on the play, and the second foul happened clearly between downs. **However, until the ball is made ready for play, the only option to enforce either foul is the Try. These fouls will, therefore, offset before the Try.**

**Note:** If Team A fouls after the ready for play on a Try, that foul can only be enforced on the Try. If Team B fouls after the ready for play on a Try, Team A has the option to enforce that foul on the Try or the Kickoff.

## RULE 16 OVERTIME PROCEDURES

### A.R. 16.1 OPENING KICKOFF RETURN FOR TOUCHDOWN

Team B receives the opening kickoff and returns it for a touchdown in the (a) regular season; or (b) postseason.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) Game over. Team B wins. No Try.
- (b) Attempt Try, kickoff B35. Team A has an opportunity to possess in the postseason.

### A.R. 16.2 TEAM B TRAILS—KICKOFF MUFFED BY TEAM B RECOVERED BY TEAM A

Following a successful field goal on the opening possession of overtime, Team A's kickoff is muffed by B1 at the B10 and is recovered by A2.

**Ruling:** Game over. Team A wins. Team B had an opportunity to possess the ball.

### A.R. 16.3 TEAM A SCORES TOUCHDOWN ON FIRST POSSESSION

Team A drives down the field on the opening possession of overtime and scores a touchdown in the (a) regular season; or (b) postseason.

#### **Rulings:**

- (a) Game over. Team A wins. No Try.
- (b) Attempt Try, kickoff A35. Team B has an opportunity to possess in the postseason.

### A.R. 16.4 TEAM A SCORES FIELD GOAL ON FIRST POSSESSION

Team A kicks a field goal on the opening possession of overtime.

**Ruling:** Three points for Team A, but the game is not over. Team A must kick off to Team B. If Team B scores a touchdown or does not score, the game is over. If B scores a field goal, the game continues in sudden death.

### A.R. 16.5 TEAM B MUFFS PUNT—RECOVERED BY TEAM A

On the opening possession of overtime, A punts and B3 muffs the punt at the B20. A6 recovers at the B22.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B22. Team B had the opportunity to possess the kick. Both teams have met the minimum requirements for possession. The first team to score wins.

### A.R. 16.6 OPENING KICKOFF—TEAM B FUMBLES—TEAM A MUFFS

On the opening kickoff of overtime, B3 returns the ball to the B30 where he is hit and fumbles. A6 muffs the loose ball to the B28 where B5 recovers.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B28. Since Team A did not possess the fumble, they are not considered to have had an opportunity at team possession.

### A.R. 16.7 OPENING POSSESSION—TEAM A PUNT BLOCKED—A RECOVERS/ADVANCES FOR FIRST DOWN

Fourth-and-5 on A45. On the opening possession of overtime, Team A's punt is blocked by B3 at the A35. A2 picks up the loose ball at the A40 and runs to the 50 for a first down.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on 50. Team B is not considered to have had an opportunity to possess the ball because it did not touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.

### A.R. 16.8 OPENING POSSESSION—TEAM A PUNT BLOCKED—MUFFED BY B BEHIND LINE

Fourth-and-5 on A45. On the opening possession of overtime, Team A's punt is blocked by B3 at the A35. B4 attempts to pick up the loose ball at the A40, but muffs it to the A33 where it is recovered by A4 who runs to the B40 for a first down.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Team B is not considered to have had an opportunity to possess the ball because it did not touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.

### A.R. 16.9 OPENING POSSESSION—TEAM A PUNT HITS BEYOND LINE—RECOVERED BY TEAM A BEHIND LINE

Fourth-and-5 on A45. On the opening possession of overtime, Team A's punt is blocked by B3 at the A35. The ball hits the ground beyond the line at the B48 and bounces back to the A43 where it is recovered by A4 who runs to the B40 for a first down.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Team B is not considered to have had an opportunity to possess the ball because it did not touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.

### A.R. 16.10 OPENING POSSESSION—TEAM A PUNT—MUFFED BY TEAM B BEYOND LINE—RECOVERED BY TEAM A

Fourth-and-5 on A45. On the opening possession of overtime, Team A's punt is blocked by B3 at the A35. The ball bounces beyond the line to the A48, where B4 muffs the loose ball to the A45 where it is recovered by A4.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Because Team B touched the punt beyond the line of scrimmage, a new series is awarded to Team A. Since Team B had the opportunity to possess the ball, both teams have met the minimum requirements for possession. The first team to score wins the game.

### A.R. 16.11 OPENING POSSESSION—TEAM A FUMBLE—RECOVERED BY TEAM B

Third-and-5 on A30. On the opening possession of overtime, A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B35 where he fumbles the ball. B2 recovers the ball and runs to the B40.

**Ruling:** B's ball, first-and-10 on B40. Both teams have had an actual possession. The first team to score wins.

### A.R. 16.12 OPENING POSSESSION—TEAM A FUMBLE—DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION

Third-and-5 on A30. On the opening possession of overtime, A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B35 where he fumbles the ball. B2 recovers the ball and runs to the B40 where he is hit and fumbles. A5 recovers at the B41.

**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B41. Both teams have had an actual possession. The first team to score wins.

- A.R. 16.13 OPENING POSSESSION—INTERCEPTION—RETURNED FOR TOUCHDOWN**  
Third-and-5 on A30. On the opening possession of overtime, B2 intercepts at the 50 and returns for a touchdown.  
**Ruling:** Game over. Team B wins. No Try. Each team has had an actual possession.
- A.R. 16.14 OPENING POSSESSION—FUMBLE—MUFFED BY TEAM B—RECOVERED BY TEAM A**  
Second-and-10 on A30. On the opening possession of overtime, A2 takes a handoff and runs to the A38 where he fumbles the ball. B2 muffs the loose ball at the A35, and it is recovered by A5 at the A33.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, third-and-7 on A33. Since the ball was loose from a fumble as opposed to a scrimmage kick beyond the line, Team B is not considered to have had an opportunity to possess the ball.
- A.R. 16.15 OPENING POSSESSION—SAFETY**  
Third-and-5 on A7. On the opening possession of overtime, A1 is tackled in his own end zone for a safety.  
**Ruling:** Game over. Team B wins. A defensive score by either team in overtime wins the game.
- A.R. 16.16 OPENING POSSESSION—BLOCKED FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT—TEAM A RECOVERS**  
Fourth-and-5 on B25. On the opening possession of overtime, Team A's field goal attempt is blocked by B3 at the line of scrimmage and lands at the B28 where it is recovered by A4 who runs to the B18 for a first down.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B18. Team B is not considered to have had an opportunity to possess the ball because it did not touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
- A.R. 16.17 OPENING POSSESSION—BLOCKED FIELD GOAL HITS BEYOND LINE—REBOUNDS BEHIND LINE**  
Fourth-and-5 on B25. On the opening possession of overtime, Team A's field goal attempt is blocked by B3 at the line of scrimmage. The ball hits the ground beyond the line at the B22 and bounces back to the B28 where it is recovered by A4 who runs to the B18 for a first down.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B18. Team B is not considered to have had an opportunity to possess the ball because it did not touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
- A.R. 16.18 OPENING POSSESSION—BLOCKED FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT—MUFFED BY TEAM B BEYOND LINE**  
Fourth-and-5 on B25. On the opening possession of overtime, Team A's field goal attempt is blocked by B3 at the line of scrimmage. The ball bounces beyond the line to the B20, where B4 muffs the loose ball to the B18 where it is recovered by A4.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on B18. Because Team B touched the kick beyond the line of scrimmage, a new series is awarded to Team A. Since Team B had the opportunity to possess the ball, both teams have met the minimum requirements for possession. The first team to score wins the game.
- A.R. 16.19 OPENING POSSESSION—FOUL ON TEAM B PRIOR TO DOUBLE CHANGE OF POSSESSION**  
First-and-10 on A20. On the opening possession of overtime, QBA1 throws a pass that is intercepted at the A49 by B1, who continues to run with the ball to the A5 where he is hit and fumbles. A2 recovers the ball and is downed at the A5. B2 is called for roughing the passer during the play.  
**Ruling:** If A accepts the penalty for roughing the passer and enforces it from the A5 (dead ball spot), it will be A's ball, first-and-10 on A20, and Team B has had its opportunity to possess the ball because there was a change of possession during the play. If Team B fumbles after an interception return and Team A recovers, and Team A elects to enforce the roughing the passer foul from the previous spot (A20), Team B has not had its opportunity to possess the ball because the penalty enforcement negates the change of possession.
- A.R. 16.20 TEAM A TRAILS—INTERCEPTION—FOUL BY TEAM B PRIOR TO CHANGE OF POSSESSION**  
Trailing 13-10 after the first team to possess the ball in overtime kicks a successful field goal, the second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 30-yard line. On its first play from scrimmage, QBA1 throws a pass that is intercepted at the 50 by B1, who is tackled immediately. B2 is called for roughing the passer.  
**Ruling:** A's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Team B did not gain possession of the ball legally; therefore, the game is not over, and Team A's initial possession will continue.
- A.R. 16.21 TEAM A TRAILS—INTERCEPTION—FOUL BY TEAM B PRIOR TO CHANGE—TOUCHDOWN BY TEAM A**  
Trailing 13-10 after the first team to possess the ball in overtime kicks a successful field goal, the second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 30-yard line. On its first play from scrimmage, QBA1 throws a pass that is intercepted at the 50 by B1, who continues to run with the ball. B1 fumbles at the A20, where A2 scoops it up and runs for a touchdown. B2 is called for roughing the passer before the interception.  
**Ruling:** Team A wins the game 16-13. The play is allowed to continue to its conclusion, and a score by either team counts. Team A would decline the foul for roughing the passer.
- A.R. 16.22 TEAM A TRAILS—INTERCEPTION—FUMBLE—FOUL BY TEAM A DURING RETURN**  
Trailing 13-10 after the first team to possess the ball in overtime kicked a successful field goal, the second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 30-yard line. On its first play from scrimmage, QBA1 throws a pass that is intercepted at the 50 by B1, who continues to run with the ball. B1 fumbles at the A20, where A2 scoops it up and runs for a touchdown. During A2's run, A3 blocks B3 in the back at the B10.  
**Ruling:** Game over B wins 13-10. Since Team A did not score without fouling, the score and foul by Team A are disregarded, and the game is over, because Team A has previously had its opportunity to score.
- A.R. 16.23 TEAM A TRAILS—INTERCEPTION—FUMBLE—FOUL BY TEAM B DURING RETURN**  
Trailing 13-10 after the first team to possess the ball in overtime kicks a successful field goal, the second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 30-yard line. On its first play from scrimmage, QBA1 throws a pass that



is intercepted at the 50 by B1, who continues to run with the ball. B1 fumbles at the A20, where A2 scoops it up and runs to the B5 where he is tackled (a) by the facemask; or (b) horse-collar tackled; or (c) tripped and knocked to the ground.

**Rulings:**

(a), (b), and (c) Game over, B wins 13-10. Since Team A did not score, and they have previously had an opportunity to score, the fouls for facemask, horse collar and tripping are disregarded, and the game is over.

**A.R. 16.24 TEAM A TRAILS—INTERCEPTION—FUMBLE—TEAM B PLAYER COMES FROM BENCH TO MAKE TACKLE**

Trailing 13-10 after the first team to possess the ball in overtime kicks a successful field goal, the second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 30-yard line. On its first play from scrimmage, QBA1 throws a pass that is intercepted at the 50 by B1, who continues to run with the ball. B1 fumbles at the A20, where A2 scoops it up and is running for an obvious touchdown when non-player B5 comes off his bench and tackles A2 at the B15.

**Ruling:** Team A wins 16-13. Referee rules a palpably unfair act and awards the touchdown to Team A.

**A.R. 16.25 TEAM A TRAILS—INTERCEPTION—FOUL BY TEAM B AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Trailing 13-10 after the first team to possess the ball in overtime kicks a successful field goal, the second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 30-yard line. On its first play from scrimmage, QBA1 throws a pass that is intercepted at the 50 by B1, who continues to run with the ball and is downed at the A30. B2 is called for holding during B1's return.

**Ruling:** Game over, Team B wins. B's foul after the interception doesn't change the fact that both teams had the opportunity to possess the ball. B's foul is therefore declined, and the game is over.

**A.R. 16.26 TEAM A TRAILS—INTERCEPTION—DOUBLE FOUL WITH CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Trailing 13-10 after the first team to possess the ball in overtime kicks a successful field goal, the second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 30-yard line. On its first play from scrimmage, QBA1 throws a pass that is intercepted at the 50 by B1 and is downed at the A20. Team A is called for holding prior to the interception, and Team B is called for an illegal block above the waist after the interception.

**Ruling:** Game over, Team B wins. Since Team A's possession ended legally, both teams have met the requirement for possession, and the game is over.

**A.R. 16.27 TEAM A TRAILS—INTERCEPTION—TEAM B FOUL BEFORE—TEAM A FOUL AFTER CHANGE**

Trailing 13-10 after the first team to possess the ball in overtime kicks a successful field goal, the second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 30-yard line. On its first play from scrimmage, QBA1 throws a pass that is intercepted at the 50 by B1, who continues to run with the ball and is downed at the A20. Team B is called for holding prior to the interception, and Team A is called for a low block after the interception.

**Ruling:** Fouls offset, and Team A's initial possession continues. A's ball, first-and-10 on A30.

**A.R. 16.28 TEAM A TRAILS—INTERCEPTION—DOUBLE FOUL AFTER CHANGE OF POSSESSION**

Trailing 13-10 after the first team to possess the ball in overtime kicks a successful field goal, the second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 30-yard line. On its first play from scrimmage, QBA1 throws a pass that is intercepted at the 50 by B1, who continues to run with the ball and is downed at the A20. After the interception, Team B is called for holding, and Team A is called for a facemask.

**Ruling:** Game over, Team B wins. The double fouls after the interception don't change the fact that both teams had the opportunity to possess the ball. The fouls offset and the game is therefore over.

**A.R. 16.29 TEAM A TRAILS—INTERCEPTION IN TEAM A'S END ZONE**

Trailing 13-10 after the first team to possess the ball in overtime kicks a successful field goal, the second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own five-yard line. On its first play from scrimmage, QBA1 throws a pass that is tipped at the line of scrimmage and intercepted by B7 in A's end zone.

**Ruling:** Game over, Team B wins 19-10. The play is allowed to continue to its conclusion, and a score by either team counts. Both teams have had their opportunity for possession, so the game is over at the conclusion of the play.

**A.R. 16.30 TEAM A TRAILS—INTERCEPTION IN OR ADVANCES INTO A'S END ZONE**

Trailing 13-10 after the first team to possess the ball in overtime kicks a successful field goal, the second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 15-yard line. On its first play from scrimmage, QBA1 throws a pass that is intercepted at the A20 by B1, who continues to run with the ball across Team A's goal line.

**Ruling:** B wins 19-10. Whether the pass is intercepted in Team A's end zone or the field of play and advanced into the end zone, the play is allowed to continue until its conclusion, and a score by either team counts.

**A.R. 16.31 REGULAR SEASON—TEAM A TRAILS WHEN PERIOD EXPIRES**

During a regular season game, the first team scores a field goal on its initial possession of overtime. The second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 10-yard line. Time expires during the second team's possession.

**Ruling:** Game over, the first team wins. For regular season games, there is a maximum of one 10-minute period. The game is over at the end of that period, and the result is based on the score at that point.

**A.R. 16.32 POST SEASON—TEAM A TRAILS WHEN PERIOD EXPIRES**

During a postseason game, the first team scores a field goal on its initial possession of overtime. The second team receives the kickoff and is downed at its own 10-yard line. Time expires during the second team's possession.

**Ruling:** A second overtime period will begin, and the game will continue until the second team's possession ends. If it does not score, the game is over, and the first team wins. If it scores a field goal, the game will continue, and the next team to score by any means shall be declared the winner.

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“2024 NFL Instant Replay Casebook”

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2024  
INSTANT REPLAY CASEBOOK  
OF THE  
NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE



Devised, Amended, and Authenticated  
by the  
National Football League

Roger Goodell, Commissioner

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## FREE KICKS

On a free kick, until the ball is legally possessed, replay can review the touching of the kick (including illegal touching, which team touched the kick first, and whether the ball was touched before it went out of bounds), whether the ball hit a boundary line, pylon, or the ground, the recovery of a free kick, and momentum/touchback. Formations are not reviewable. Once the kick is possessed, it becomes a running play, and those guidelines apply. When on-field officials award possession to the kicking team at the end of any free kick down, including when that ruling is negated by a foul, it is an automatic Replay Official review.

### ILLEGAL TOUCHING

#### A.R. 15.1 Illegal touch after being out of bounds

On a kickoff from the A35, the ball is rolling loose at the sideline at the B15-yard line. A1 goes out of bounds, reestablishes, and is the first to touch at the B15-yard line where he recovers the ball. There are no flags on the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, re-kick A30. Illegal touching by A1. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### A.R. 15.2 Illegal touch before ball goes 10 yards

With 6 minutes remaining in the fourth quarter, on an onside kick attempt from the A35, the ball is touched first: (a) by A2 at the A40 and then is recovered by A3 at the A45; or (b) by B2 at the A40 and then is recovered by A3 at the A45. Officials award the ball to Team A at A45.

##### **Rulings:**

(a) Reviewable. B's ball, first-and-10 on A40, illegal touching by A2.

(b) Reviewable. A's ball, first-and-10 on A45.

Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of these plays because the kicking team was awarded possession at the end of a free kick down.

#### A.R. 15.3 Legal touching of onside kick

Team A attempts an onside kick from the A35. A1 has his feet at the A44 when he picks up the ball that is on the ground at the A46. Officials rule illegal touching.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A46. No foul because the ball was touched after it reached B's restraining line. This play would need to be challenged by a head coach if it occurred before the two-minute warning, because on-field officials did not rule a legal recovery by the kicking team.

### FREE KICK OUT OF BOUNDS

#### A.R. 15.4 Kick touched before going out of bounds

On a kickoff to start the game, the ball is rolling loose at the B12-yard line. The ball rolls out of bounds at the B10-yard line after touching B1's foot. Officials rule kickoff out of bounds.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, B's ball first-and-10 on B10. Touching of a kick.

#### A.R. 15.5 Kick not touched in field of play—Kickoff out of bounds

Team A kicks off and the ball goes between the legs of kick returner B3 without touching him and out of bounds at the B5-yard line. Officials rule the ball touched B3 and spot the ball at the B5.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, B's ball first-and-10 on B40. Kickoff out of bounds. Reset game clock to the time of the kickoff.

#### A.R. 15.6 Player straddling sideline—Kickoff out of bounds

Team A kicks off and the airborne ball comes down near the sideline at the B5-yard line where B9 catches it with one foot on the sideline and another in the field of play. Officials rule that B9 was inbounds when he touched the ball and spot it at the B5.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, B's ball first-and-10 on B40. Kickoff out of bounds. Reset game clock to the time of the kickoff.

#### A.R. 15.7 Ball touching pylon

Team A kicks off and the ball hits the outside edge of the goal line pylon and then goes out of bounds. Officials rule the ball did not hit the pylon and that it is a kickoff out of bounds, B's ball on B40.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, B's ball first-and-10 on B30. Touchback. Replay can review whether the ball hit a pylon.

#### A.R. 15.8 Ball touching sideline

Team A kicks off and the ball hits the sideline at the B15-yard line and bounces back towards the middle of the field where A2 falls on it. Officials rule that the ball did not hit the sideline at the B15 and award possession to A.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, B's ball first-and-10 on B40. Reset game clock to the time of the kickoff. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### A.R. 15.9 Officials rule ball hit sideline, clear recovery by Team A

Team A kicks off and the ball lands near the sideline at the B15-yard line and bounces back towards the middle of the field where A2 falls on it at the B17. Officials rule that the ball hit the sideline at the B15, kick off out of bounds. Replays show the ball did not touch the sideline.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B17. If there is a clear recovery in the continuing action after the ball hit the ground, then replay can award the ball to the recovering team at that spot.

### RECOVERY OF LOOSE BALL

#### A.R. 15.10 Recovery at sideline

Team A kicks off and the ball lands near the sideline at the B15-yard line. A2 recovers it there with his left leg touching the sideline. Officials award the ball to Team A at the B15.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, B's ball first-and-10 on B40. Kickoff out of bounds. Replay can review whether a player recovered a kick inbounds. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.11 Recovery in end zone**

B9 muffs A's kickoff at the B2. The ball goes into the end zone where B2 and A4 jump on the loose ball. B2 clearly possesses it while on the ground. A4 then pulls it away from him. Officials award possession to A for a TD.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, B's ball first-and-10 on B20. Touchback. The recovery between two or more players is reviewable in the end zone or field of play. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.12 Recovery of a kick in the field of play**

On an onside kick attempt from the A35, A1 leaps in the air and grabs the ball at the A47-yard line and goes to the ground with it. A1 maintains control of the ball through his initial contact with the ground, and then B2 then pulls the ball away from A1. The officials rule A1 never had possession and give the ball to Team B.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A47. Possession of a loose ball in the field of play is reviewable. This applies to fumbles, forward/backward passes, and kicks.

**BALL TOUCHING GROUND**

**A.R. 15.13 Kick hitting ground off the tee**

A1 attempts an onside kick from the A35. The ball hits the ground as soon as it leaves the tee and bounds high in the air to the A48 where B2 signals for a fair catch. (a) A2 hits B2 before the ball arrives and A3 recovers the ball at the A48, and officials rule fair catch interference; (b) B2 catches the ball, and officials rule a valid fair catch.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Whether the ball hit the ground off the tee is reviewable. Once the ball hits the ground, a fair catch is no longer allowed. (a) A's ball first-and-10 on A48, no foul for fair catch interference; only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play; (b) B's ball first-and-10 on B47, invalid fair catch signal.

**NON-REVIEWABLE SITUATIONS ON FREE KICKS**

**A.R. 15.14 Blocking by kickers before touch**

On an onside kick attempt, before the ball travels 10 yards, A1 blocks passive player B1 at the A40-yard line enabling his teammate to recover. Officials give possession to Team A with no flag.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable.

**A.R. 15.15 Spot of kick out of bounds near goal line**

Team A kicks off and the ball lands at the B3. It bounces high into the air before going out of bounds untouched at the B1. Officials rule touchback.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. Replay can only review whether the ball touches a player, a boundary line, the pylon, the ground, or anything on a boundary line. Where an airborne kick crossed the sideline is not reviewable.

## SCRIMMAGE KICKS

On kicks from scrimmage, replay can review touching of the kick (including first touching, illegal touching, which team touched the kick first, the spot of touching in relation to the line of scrimmage or the goal line, and touching of the kick before contact with the kicker), whether the ball hit the ground, a boundary line, the pylon, or anything on a boundary line. Touching of a kick is reviewable, but replay cannot review whether a player was responsible for touching the ball (see 9-2). The recovery of a scrimmage kick is also reviewable (see Loose Balls). This includes whether a punt was possessed and fumbled, or muffed.

Replay can also review whether a kick from scrimmage hit a scoreboard, guide wire, flag, or any other object. If it is not detected by the officials on the field, the Replay Official can stop the game to review at any time including outside two minutes of either half. A team could also challenge this if it occurs before the two-minute warning. If it is determined that the ball hit an object, then the down will be replayed from the previous spot and the game clock will be reset to when the ball was snapped and then started on the next snap. This applies to all loose balls.

For field goal and Try attempts, see **Scoring Plays**.

### FIRST TOUCHING

#### **A.R. 15.16 First touched by Team B**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. Team A punts and the ball is rolling loose and is downed by A1 on the B10-yard line. The officials rule first touching by A1 and award the ball to the receivers. Replays show the punted ball grazed off the fingertips of B1 at the B13-yard line before the recovery by A1.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-goal on B10. This is a coach's challenge because the receiving team was awarded possession on the field.

#### **A.R. 15.17 First touched by Team A**

Fourth-and-10 on A40. A1 recovers a punted ball at the B10-yard line ruled to have been touched by B1 on the B15-yard line. Replays show that the ball did not touch B1.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B10. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.18 Touch with fair catch signal**

Fourth-and-7 on A35. B1 signals for a fair catch. The ball hits the ground near A4 and then bounces to the B35-yard line where B2 picks it up and returns it for a TD. The officials rule A4 touched the ball making B2's advance legal. Replays show the ball did not touch A4.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B35. Since A did not touch the ball, it is dead when B2 possessed it. Reset the clock to the time when B2 recovered the ball. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

### TOUCHING OF THE KICK NEAR THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

#### **A.R. 15.19 Touching of kick beyond line of scrimmage**

Fourth-and-9 on A10. A1's punt is partially blocked and goes to the A13 where it rebounds, untouched, to the A11. A1 recovers the loose ball at the A11 and runs to the A26. Officials rule that A1 recovered the ball behind the line of scrimmage and award the ball to Team A at the A26.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on A11. Replay can review the spot of A1's touching in relation to the line of scrimmage. Reset the clock to the time when A1 recovered the loose ball. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

### TOUCHING OF KICK BEFORE CONTACT WITH KICKER

#### **A.R. 15.20 Touching of kick before running into the kicker**

Fourth-and-3 on B45. A1's punt goes out of bounds at the B35. B1 is called for running into the kicker. Replays show that B1 tipped the ball before running into the punter.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B35. If the ball is touched before contact with the kicker, there is no foul for running into the kicker. This is a coach's challenge because the receiving team was awarded possession on the field before the foul was enforced.

#### **A.R. 15.21 Touching before roughing the kicker**

Fourth-and-19 on B40. A1's punt goes out of bounds at the B30. B1 is called for roughing the kicker. Replays show that B1 tipped the ball before roughing the punter.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B30. The touching is reviewable and negates the penalty. If the Referee considers the action to be unnecessary roughness, the Referee should tell the challenging coach or the Replay Official and announce that the play will not be reviewed for that reason. This is a coach's challenge because the receiving team was awarded possession on the field before the foul was enforced.

### TOUCHING OF KICK AT GOAL LINE

#### **A.R. 15.22 Touched in field of play**

Fourth-and-7 on B42. A's punt hits on the 1-yard line and bounces in the air toward the end zone. A1 leaps from the field of play and while airborne bats the ball back to A3 at the 2-yard line. Officials rule touchback. Replays show that A1 did not touch the goal line before he contacted the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B2. If spot where A1 left his feet in field of play is more advantageous to receiving team the ball will be placed there.



**A.R. 15.23 Touched in end zone**

Fourth-and-7 on B42. A's punt hits on the 1-yard line and bounces in the air toward the end zone. A1 leaps near the goal line and bats the ball to A3 at the 2-yard line. Officials rule ball dead at 2-yard line. Replays show that A1 stepped on the goal line before touching the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchback. B's ball first-and-10 on B20. Reset the clock to the time when A1 touched the ball.

**A.R. 15.24 Player does not reestablish**

Fourth-and-15 on B40. A2 goes into the end zone and then returns to the field of play to down the ball at the B1-yard line. Replays show that A2 only had one foot down in the field of play before touching the ball. Officials rule the ball dead at the 1-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B20, touchback. A2 must reestablish in the field of play with both feet or any body part other than his hands before he touches the ball.

**A.R. 15.25 Ball hitting the goal line**

Fourth-and-20 on B40. Punted ball hits the goal line and bounces to the B3-yard line, where it is downed by A1. Officials give the ball to B at the 3-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B20, touchback. Reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the goal line. Ball is dead when it hits in the end zone. Whether a ball touched the goal line is reviewable.

**ILLEGAL TOUCHING****A.R. 15.26 Player out of bounds coming back in and touching kick**

Fourth-and-17 on A40. A1's punt goes over the head of receiver B1 and rolls to the B9-yard line where A2 is the first to touch the kick. Officials rule that A2 did not step on sideline during the play and give ball to B at the B9-yard line. Replays show A2 touching the sideline at the 50 before touching the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Illegal touching of kick. Receiving team has option for re-kick, A's ball fourth-and-22 on A35, or B's ball first-and-10 on B14.

**A.R. 15.27 Illegal touching inside 5-yard line**

Fourth-and-9 on 50. A2 touches the sideline while running downfield to cover a punt and downs the ball at the B3-yard line. Officials rule that A2 was not out of bounds and give the ball to B at the 3-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Illegal touching on A. Receiving team has option for re-kick, A's ball fourth-and-14 on A45 or B's ball first-and-10 on B20. If the illegal touching is inside the 5-yard line, B has the option of taking an awarded touchback, instead of the five-yard penalty.

**A.R. 15.28 No illegal touching, ball first touched by Team B**

Fourth-and-7 on A23. A2 touches the sideline while running downfield to cover the punt. B1 muffs the punt and A2 recovers at the B30-yard line. Officials penalize A2 for illegal touching of a kick. Team A challenges that B1 was the first to touch the kick.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touching of kick by B1 allows A2 to legally recover. A's ball first-and-10 on B30. Team A's challenge is successful, and it is not charged a timeout.

**TOUCHING OF KICK AT SIDELINE****A.R. 15.29 Ball hitting sideline**

Fourth-and-9 on A25. A1 punts and the ball hits the sideline at the B27 and bounces back into the field of play where B2 picks it up and runs for a touchdown. Officials award TD to B.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B27. Reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the sideline. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.30 Ball does not hit sideline**

Fourth-and-9 on A25. A1 punts and the ball is muffed by B2 at the B25. The ball hits near the sideline and is recovered by A3 at the B23. Officials rule the ball hit the sideline at the B25 and award possession to Team B there. Replays show the ball did not hit the sideline.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B23. There must be a clear recovery in the immediate continuing action to give the ball to the recovering team.

**A.R. 15.31 No clear recovery in the immediate continuing action**

Fourth-and-9 on A25. A1 punts and the ball lands near the sideline at the B35 and then bounces to the B5 where it is eventually downed by A3. Officials rule the ball hit the sideline at the B35 and spot the ball there. Replays show that the ball did not touch the sideline.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, but the recovery must occur in the immediate continuing action to change the ruling. If players did not continue to play through the recovery, then it is B's ball first-and-10 on B35.

**A.R. 15.32 Recovery at sideline**

Fourth-and-9 on A25. A1 punts and the ball is muffed by B2 at the B25. A2 recovers the ball there with one foot on the sideline. Officials award possession to A.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B25. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**BALL TOUCHING OBJECT/GROUND****A.R. 15.33 Ball hitting guide wire**

Fourth-and-4 on A33. A1 punts and the ball hits the guide wire for an overhead camera and lands at the B48 where it is downed

by A20. Officials spot the ball there.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-4 on A33. Reset the clock to the time at the snap and start on snap.

**A.R. 15.34 Ball hitting the ground before reaching the punter**

Fourth-and-11 on B45. B1 is called for running into the kicker. Replays show the ball hit the ground before the punter caught it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Whether the ball hit the ground in the field of play before being touched is reviewable, and the flag for running into the kicker is picked up. Similarly, if the Referee ruled that there was no foul because the ball hit the ground, replay can create the foul if replays show that the ball did not hit the ground.

**MUFF VERSUS FUMBLE**

**A.R. 15.35 Possession of a punt**

Fourth-and-10 on A20. B1 attempts to field a punt but loses the ball at the B40-yard line. A3 recovers there. The officials rule fumble, and A3 is allowed to advance for a touchdown. Replays show that B1 never had control of the ball before it hit the ground.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B40. Whether a punt is muffed or fumbled is reviewable. Reset the clock to when A3 recovered the ball. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.36 Possession of a punt**

Fourth-and-10 on A20. B1 attempts to field a punt but fumbles the ball at the B40. A3 recovers there and advances the ball across B's goal line. Officials rule that B3 muffed the ball and kill the play when A3 recovers it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B40. Whether the punt was muffed or fumbled is reviewable, but no advance can be given. The touching of the kick by B1 is also reviewable. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**NON-REVIEWABLE SITUATIONS ON SCRIMMAGE KICKS**

**A.R. 15.37 Spot of untouched kick out of bounds**

Fourth-and-5 on A45. A's airborne punt goes out of bounds untouched at the 9-yard line. Officials mark the ball at the 4-yard line.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. The spot where an airborne kick crosses the sideline is not reviewable.

**A.R. 15.38 Blocking into a kicked ball**

Fourth-and-8 on A33. A's punt is rolling at the B31 where A1 blocks passive player B1 into the ball. A2 picks up the ball and the officials award possession to A.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. While touching of a kick is reviewable, being blocked into a kicked ball is not. Replay can review the touch by B and possession by A.

**A.R. 15.39 Fair catch interference**

Fourth-and-18 on A40. B1 signals for a fair catch but is contacted by A1 before he can catch the ball. The ball bounces off B1 to the B35. A1 recovers the ball there and the officials award Team A possession with no flags on the play.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. The action that creates a foul for fair catch interference or interference with the opportunity is not reviewable. The only reviewable aspect of this play is whether B1 touched the ball and whether A1 recovered it.

**A.R. 15.40 Invalid fair catch signal**

Fourth-and-5 on A35. On a punted ball B1, who is standing at the B30-yard line, extends his right arm straight up in the air for a second and brings it back down. B1 is awarded with a valid fair catch.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. Fair catch signal is not reviewable.

**A.R. 15.41 Advance by fair catch signaler**

Fourth-and-7 on A35. B1 signals for a fair catch. The ball hits the ground and bounces to B1 who scores a TD.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. A fair catch signal is not reviewable.

## **RUNNING PLAYS**

On running plays, replay can review whether a player advanced the ball across the line to gain or the goal line. This is reviewable in the field of play and at the sideline. Following a line to gain review, the ball will be placed at the correct dead ball spot, but the challenge will be successful only if the line to gain ruling is changed.

The next situation involves a player allowed to advance by the officials because he is ruled not down by contact or not out of bounds. Replay can review whether the player should have been down by contact or out of bounds before the advance. If the officials put the player down or out of bounds, replay can only review the position of the ball in relation to the line to gain or the goal line, and can award a TD or fumble (with clear recovery) that occurs before the runner takes two additional steps after he had been ruled to touch out of bounds. If a player was falling or being tackled and officials erroneously rule the player down by contact at the start of the fall or tackle, replay can place the ball at the correct down by contact spot, provided the player did not regain his balance and continue to run.

If on-field officials rule forward progress, then replay can only review the position of the ball in relation to the line to gain or goal line and can rule that there is a fumble (with clear recovery) if possession is lost prior to or simultaneously with the defensive contact. If the line to gain or goal line is not involved, the spot of forward progress is not reviewable. Replay cannot review whether a runner's forward progress should have been ruled as stopped or whether a runner gave himself up.

If a runner's helmet comes off during the play, this is treated the same as down by contact. Replay can review the position of the ball in relation to the line to gain or the goal line when the runner's helmet came completely off his head.

### **LINE TO GAIN**

#### **A.R. 15.42 Line to gain in field of play**

Third-and-10 on A20. A2 takes a handoff and runs close to the first down marker. Officials spot the ball at the 29 even though A1 had the ball extended to the 31-yard line when his knee hit at the 29.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A31.

#### **A.R. 15.43 Line to gain at the sideline**

Third-and-4 on A36. A1 runs near the sideline and is pushed out of bounds at the A40. Officials rule that the ball crossed the sideline at the A39 and make it fourth down. Replays show that the ball crossed the sideline at the A41.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A41.

#### **A.R. 15.44 Line to gain at the sideline, player ruled out of bounds**

Third-and-5 on A35. A1 runs near the sideline and officials rule that he stepped out of bounds at the A39 and spot the ball there. Replays show that A1 did not step out of bounds at the A39, and when his foot was near the sideline, the ball was at the A40.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A40. Whether A1 stepped out of bounds at the A39 is not reviewable. However, the spot of the ball when A1 was ruled out of bounds is reviewable in relation to the line to gain.

#### **A.R. 15.45 Forward progress related to line to gain**

Third-and-10 on B20. A1 runs to the B9-yard line and then gets driven back by defenders. Officials rule forward progress was stopped at the 11-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-goal on B9. When on-field officials rule that a runner's forward progress was stopped, the ball is spotted at its furthest point before the runner was driven backward.

#### **A.R. 15.46 Re-spotting of ball**

Third-and-3 on A40. A2 takes a handoff and is tackled near the line to gain. The officials spot the ball at the A41. Team A challenges that the ball reached the line to gain. Replays show the correct spot was at the A42.

**Ruling:** Reviewable play. A's ball, fourth-and-1 on A42. The ball is re-spotted at the A42, but since the line to gain was not reached Team A loses the challenge and is charged a timeout.

#### **A.R. 15.47 Forward progress near sideline**

Third-and-8 on A27. QBA1 throws a forward pass to A2 at the A36. While airborne after gaining control of the ball at the A36, he is contacted by B3 and driven backwards out of bounds at the A34. Officials rule A2 out of bounds at the A34, stop the clock and mark the ball short of the line to gain at the A34. Team A wants to challenge that A2 caught the pass beyond the line to gain.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A36. For purposes of a replay review, forward progress is determined when a player with control of the ball is contacted by an opponent and driven backward.

### **DOWN BY CONTACT**

#### **A.R. 15.48 Runner down by contact**

First-and-10 on A30. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the A40-yard line where he is hit by a defender and his right knee hits the ground, but he continues to run and is eventually tackled at the B43-yard line. Officials rule the runner down at the B43.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A40, reset game clock to the time when A2 was down by contact, and wind on the ready for play.

#### **A.R. 15.49 Runner down by contact**

First-and-10 on A30. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the A45 where he is hit by B3 causing him to stumble and before he can regain his balance, he goes to the ground at the 50 where he gets up and advances to the B20.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A50, reset game clock to the time when A2 was down by contact, and wind on the

ready for play. If the runner does not regain his balance after being contacted by a defender, he is down by contact when a body part other than his hands or feet touch the ground.

**A.R. 15.50 Receiver down by contact**

First-and-10 on A30. A2 jumps to catch a pass at the B38 and controls the ball while airborne. B2 jumps to try to bat the pass down and contacts A2. They separate and A2 goes to the ground. He immediately gets up and advances the ball for a TD, which the officials allow.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B38, reset game clock to the time when A2 was down by contact, and wind on the ready for play. If the contact occurs after the receiver gains control of the ball, then he is down by contact when a body part, other than his hands or feet, touches the ground. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.51 Runner not down by contact while going to the ground**

First-and-10 on 50. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B40 where he is hit by B3, causing him to stumble and fall to the ground at the B37. Officials rule that A2's knee touched the ground at the B40 when he was hit. Replays show that A2's knee did not touch the ground at the B40.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B37, reset game clock to the time when A2 was down by contact, and wind on the ready for play. Successful challenge. Whether a runner was down by contact is reviewable. If a runner is ruled down by contact while falling or stumbling, the ball can be placed at the correct down by contact spot if replays show that he was not initially down by contact. No advance after the runner regains his balance is allowed.

**OUT OF BOUNDS**

**A.R. 15.52 Runner stepping out of bounds**

First-and-10 on A30. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B24-yard line where he is pushed out of bounds. Replays show that A2 stepped on the sideline at the B42-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B42. Reset clock to when A2 stepped out of bounds.

**RUNNER LOSES HELMET**

**A.R. 15.53 Line to gain**

Third-and-6 on B46. A1 runs to the B40 and gets hit, causing his helmet to come off. Officials kill the play and spot the ball at the B41. Replays show that the ball was at the B40 when the helmet came completely off his head.

**Ruling:** Reviewable Play. A's ball first-and-10 on B40. The helmet coming off is treated just like down by contact.

**NON-REVIEWABLE SITUATIONS ON RUNNING PLAYS**

**A.R. 15.54 Down by contact**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the A25 where he is hit by B3 causing him to stumble and his left knee appears to hit the ground at the A28, but he regains his balance and runs out of bounds at the A40. Officials rule the runner down at the A28. Replays show that he was not down.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. A's ball second-and-2 on A28. On this type of play, once a player is ruled down by contact, replay cannot award any further advance.

**A.R. 15.55 Runner stepping out of bounds**

Second-and-10 on A10. A2 takes a handoff and the officials' rule that he steps out of bounds at the A16-yard line. Replays show that A2 did not step out at the A16.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. A's ball third-and-4 on A16.

**A.R. 15.56 Forward progress not involved with line to gain or goal line**

Third-and-3 on B43. A2 takes a handoff, and his forward progress is stopped near the line to gain. The officials spot the ball at the B41, resulting in fourth down. Replays show that the ball was at the B42 when A2's forward progress was stopped. Team B's coach wants to challenge that the ball should have been spotted at the B42.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. Team B could challenge that the ball was short of the line to gain if officials ruled a first down, but it cannot challenge the spot of the ball when officials ruled the ball short of the line to gain. If Team A challenged the line to gain ruling, the ball would be placed at the B42, and the challenge would be unsuccessful.

## FUMBLES (LOOSE BALLS)

There are several situations involving fumbles that are reviewable. The most frequent is whether a runner fumbled or was down by contact. If the ruling on the field is a fumble, then replay can determine whether the runner was down by contact, out of bounds, or that his helmet came completely off before he lost possession. Replay cannot rule on whether a runner's forward progress was stopped before the fumble.

If a runner is ruled down or out of bounds, but he really fumbled the ball, there must be a clear recovery in the continuing action after the fumble to give the ball to the recovering team. If on-field officials make a preliminary ruling of which team recovered the ball, that preliminary ruling constitutes a clear recovery. If there is no clear recovery, but the ball clearly is recovered in the end zone of the team that fumbled the ball, it is a safety.

Replay can also review whether a loose ball touched a boundary line, or anything on a boundary line, including the pylon. If there is no video evidence as to which player recovered the loose ball, the ruling on the field stands.

### FUMBLES

#### **A.R. 15.57 Runner down before fumble**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the A25 where he is hit by a defender and loses the ball and B1 recovers. Officials rule fumble and give possession to B. A1's left knee hit the ground before he lost the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-5 on A25, reset game clock to the time when A2 was down by contact, and wind on the ready for play. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.58 Runner not down, back of hand or wrist touches**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the A25 where he is hit by a defender and loses the ball and B1 recovers. Officials rule fumble and give possession to B. The back of A2's hand and wrist touched the ground before he lost control of it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on A25. Any part of the hand or wrist does not put a player down. Any part of the arm above the wrist will put a player down. The same holds true for the foot or the ankle. It must be above the ankle (shin/calf) to put a player down. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.59 Runner down, any body part other than hand or foot touches**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the A25 where he is hit by a defender and loses the ball and B1 recovers. Officials rule fumble and give possession to B. A2's left shin hit the ground before he lost control of the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-5 on A25, reset game clock to the time when A2 was down by contact, and wind on the ready for play. Any part of the leg above the ankle will put a player down. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.60 Runner out of bounds before fumble**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the A35 near the sideline where he is hit by a defender and loses the ball and B1 recovers. The officials rule fumble and give possession to B. A2's left foot was out of bounds before he lost the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A35, reset game clock to the time when A2 stepped out of bounds. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

### DOWN BY CONTACT—CLEAR RECOVERY

#### **A.R. 15.61 Runner fumbled, clear recovery**

First-and-10 on 50. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B40 where he loses the ball and B1 recovers at the B42 and advances into A's end zone. Officials rule A2 was down by contact at the B40. Replays show that A2 lost the ball before he was down by contact.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B42. Replay can give the ball to B but cannot award an advance. Reset the clock to the time when B1 recovered the ball.

#### **A.R. 15.62 Runner fumbled – Officials make preliminary ruling of recovery**

First-and-10 on 50. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B42 where he loses the ball and several players from both teams attempt to recover it in a pile at the B42. The Referee ruled that B1 recovered the loose ball at the B42, but the Line Judge ruled that A2 was down by contact before the ball came loose. Replays show that A2 fumbled before he was down by contact. Team B challenges the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B42, Team B is not charged with a timeout. When on-field officials make a preliminary ruling of which team recovered the ball, that preliminary ruling constitutes a clear recovery. If officials do not make a preliminary ruling of recovery and there is no video evidence of a clear recovery, the ball remains with Team A at the original down by contact spot, and the defense loses the challenge and a timeout. A player coming out of a pile with the ball is not a clear recovery. If the players piled on the ball are all from the same team, then it is a clear recovery.

#### **A.R. 15.63 Fumble following interception, no clear recovery in end zone**

Second-and-5 on B25. On the first series of Overtime, QBA1 throws a long pass to A2, which is intercepted by B1 in the end zone. B1 runs the ball out to the B5-yard line, where he is tackled by A2 and ruled down by contact. During the tackle, the ball comes loose and rolls into the end zone where players from both teams attempt to recover the ball in a pile of players. Replays show that B1 fumbled the ball before he was down by contact. The Replay Official reviews the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Safety. Game over. Team A wins. There is no clear recovery by Team A, so a touchdown cannot be awarded. However, someone recovered the ball in the end zone, so it is at least a safety. The on-field ruling of down by contact is therefore reversed to a safety. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.64 Runner fumbled, touchback**

First-and-goal on B5. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B1 near the goal line pylon. He gets hit and fumbles the ball through the end zone before he is down by contact. The officials rule A2 down at the B1.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B20, reset clock to the time when the ball touches out of bounds. If there is clear visual evidence that the ball went out of bounds through the end zone in the continuing action after the fumble, then replay can make it a touchback.

**OUT OF BOUNDS—CLEAR RECOVERY****A.R. 15.65 Runner fumbled, clear recovery**

First-and-10 on 50. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B40 where he loses the ball and B1 recovers at the B42 and advances into A's end zone. Officials rule that A2 was out of bounds at the B40. A2 lost possession before he was out of bounds.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B42. Replay can give the ball to Team B, but no advance is given. Reset game clock to the time when B1 recovered the ball. There must be video evidence of a clear recovery inbounds or the ruling on the field stands.

**A.R. 15.66 Runner fumbled, touchback**

First-and-goal on B5. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B1 near the goal line pylon. He gets hit and fumbles the ball through the end zone. The officials rule A2 out of bounds at the B1. Replays show that A2 did not step out of bounds before the fumble.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B20. Reset game clock to the time when the ball touched the ground out of bounds. If there is clear visual evidence that A2 did not step out of bounds before the fumble and the ball went out of bounds through the end zone in the continuing action after the fumble, replay can make it a touchback.

**A.R. 15.67 Fumble backward out of bounds**

First-and-10 on A5. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the A7 near the sideline. He gets hit and loses the ball which goes out of bounds at the A1. The officials rule A2 out of bounds at the A7. Replays show that A2 lost the ball before he stepped out of bounds.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-14 on A1. In this play, if there is clear visual evidence that the ball went out of bounds in the field of play, then replay can put it at that spot after the review. If there is no video evidence that the ball went out of bounds in the field of play or through the end zone, then the ruling on the field stands.

**RUNNER LOSES HELMET—FUMBLE****A.R. 15.68 Helmet comes off before fumble**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the A25 where he is hit by a defender and loses the ball and B1 recovers. Officials rule fumble and give possession to B. A1's helmet came completely off his head before he lost control of the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-5 on A25, reset clock to the time when A1's helmet came completely off his head. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.69 Fumble before helmet comes off**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the A25 where he is hit by a defender and loses the ball and B1 clearly recovers. Officials rule that A1's helmet came completely off before he lost control of the ball. Replays show that the ball was loose before the helmet came off.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on A25, reset the clock to when B1 recovered the ball. There must be a clear recovery in the continuing action after the fumble to give the ball to the recovering team.

**LOOSE BALL RECOVERY IN FIELD OF PLAY****A.R. 15.70 Loose ball recovery in field of play**

First-and-10 on 50. A2 takes a handoff and runs up the middle to the B47 and fumbles. Replays show that B1 recovers in the field of play and is contacted by an opponent. Officials rule that A3 recovered.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B47, reset clock to the time when B1 recovered the ball. Possession of a loose ball between opponents is reviewable in the field of play and the end zone.

**A.R. 15.71 Simultaneous recovery of loose ball**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 runs to the A25 and fumbles. Replays show that A1 and B1 recover simultaneously in the middle of the field. Officials give the ball to Team B.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-5 on A25. Wind clock. This play is reviewable in the field of play and in the end zone. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**LOOSE BALL RECOVERY AT SIDELINE****A.R. 15.72 Recovery of a fumble in relation to the sideline**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 runs to the A28 and fumbles. Replays show B1 recovers at the A30 with one foot on the sideline. Officials give ball to Team B.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-2 on A28, reset clock to the time when B1 touched the ball, and wind clock. Forward fumble out of bounds, bring ball back to spot of fumble. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.73 Losing control of ball before completing recovery**

First-and-10 on A20. A1 runs to the A35-yard line and fumbles. B1 gains control of the ball at the A34 while airborne but loses possession after hitting the ground out of bounds. Officials award the ball to B at the A34.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A34, wind clock. Gaining possession of a fumble is treated the same as catching a pass. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.74 Player must reestablish**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 runs to the A25 and fumbles. B1 leaps from out of bounds and touches the ball at the A27 before re-establishing himself in the field of play. B2 then recovers the ball inbounds at the A29. Officials give the ball to B.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-5 on A25, reset the clock to the time when B1 touched the ball and then wind. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.75 No clear recovery at sideline**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a pass to A2 at the A33 near the sideline. A2 catches the pass and turns up field before being hit and the ball comes loose at the A35. B1 recovers the ball near the sideline, but there is no clear evidence whether B1 was touching out of bounds when he recovered the ball. Officials rule an incomplete pass. Team B challenges the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A35, reset the clock to the time when B1 touched the ball and then wind. This is a catch and fumble, but there is no clear recovery because B1 did not clearly recover the ball inbounds. When there is no clear recovery in this situation, the ball will be awarded to the team last in possession at the spot where possession was lost. The challenge is successful, and Team B is not charged a timeout.

**LOOSE BALL HITTING SIDELINE****A.R. 15.76 Ball out of bounds**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 runs to the A28 and fumbles. The ball hits the sideline at the A30 and bounces back into the field of play where B1 recovers. Officials give ball to Team B at the 30-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-2 on A28, reset game clock to the time when the ball touched the sideline, and then wind. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.77 Ball not out, clear recovery**

First-and-10 on A20. A2 runs to the A28 and fumbles. The ball hits near the sideline at the A30 and is recovered by B1 at the A32. Officials rule the ball hit the sideline and give the ball back to A. Replays show the ball did not hit the sideline.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on A32. Reset game clock to the time when B1 recovered the ball. If there is a clear recovery in the continuing action after the ball hit the ground, replay can give the ball to that team at that spot. If there is no clear recovery, the ruling on the field stands.

**NON-REVIEWABLE SITUATIONS ON FUMBLES****A.R. 15.78 Forward progress before ball coming loose**

First-and-10 on 50. A2 takes a handoff and runs up the middle to the B47 where he gets hit and loses the ball. The Down Judge ruled that A2's progress had been stopped before the ball came loose.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. A's ball second-and-7 on B47. Whether a runner's forward progress was stopped before a fumble is not reviewable.

**A.R. 15.79 Fumble before forward progress**

First-and-10 on 50. A2 takes a handoff and runs up the middle to the B47 where he gets hit and loses the ball as he is being driven back by defenders. The Down Judge rules fumble and B77 recovers at the B45.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B45. Whether a runner's forward progress was stopped before a fumble is not reviewable.



## FOURTH DOWN/TWO-MINUTE FUMBLE/FUMBLE FORWARD OUT OF BOUNDS

If the officials fail to bring the ball back to the spot of a fourth-down fumble, two-minute fumble, fumble forward out of bounds, or spot of recovery when required to do so by rule, the play is reviewable, and replay can bring the ball back to the spot of the fumble/recovery regardless of whether it involves a score, potential score, a change of possession, or the line to gain.

### REVIEWABLE SITUATIONS

#### **A.R. 15.80 Fourth-down fumble**

Fourth-and-goal on B8. A1 runs to the B3 and fumbles, the ball rolls into the end zone where it is recovered by A4. Officials award touchdown to A.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B3. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.81 Two-minute fumble**

Second-and-12 on A23. With 1:12 remaining in the second quarter, QBA1 and back A2 muff the exchange at the A20, the ball bounces up to A2 who runs to the A28 where he is tackled. Officials spot the ball at the A28.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball third-and-15 on A20, reset clock to the time when A2 recovered the ball and either team can elect to use a charged team timeout to avoid a 10-second runoff from that time. If the officials fail to bring the ball back to the spot of a fumble or fumble recovery when required to do so by rule, it is a reviewable play. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.82 Two-minute fumble, Team A score**

Third-and-goal on B2. With 1:42 remaining in the fourth quarter, QBA1 and back A2 muff the exchange at the B4 and the ball rolls into the end zone where A2 falls on it. Officials award a touchdown to Team A.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-goal on B4, reset the clock to the time when A2 recovered the ball and either team can elect to use a charged team timeout to avoid a 10-second runoff from that time. Since A2 never possessed the ball, the fumbling player is A1. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.83 Two-minute fumble, change of possession**

Second-and-10 on A26. With 1:42 remaining in the fourth quarter, A2 catches a pass and runs to the A39 where he is hit and fumbles. A3 picks up the loose ball at the A41 and runs to the 50 where he fumbles. B6 recovers and returns to the A20.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A39, reset the clock to the time when A3 recovered the ball and either team can elect to use a charged team timeout to avoid a 10-second runoff from that time. The ball is dead once it is possessed by A3. Team A retains possession at the spot of the fumble. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.84 Two-minute fumble, safety**

Third-and-10 on A2. With 0:56 left in the fourth quarter, QBA1 drops back into his end zone and gets hit causing him to fumble the ball. A3 picks up the loose ball in the EZ and runs to the A7 where the officials spot the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, Safety, SK A20. Reset the clock to the time when A3 recovered the loose ball. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.85 Fourth-down fumble, line to gain**

Fourth-and-4 on B34. A1 runs to the B31 and fumbles. The ball is recovered by A2 at the B30 and the officials spot the ball there, first-and-10 for Team A.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B31, reset the clock to the time when A2 recovered the ball.

#### **A.R. 15.86 Fumble forward out of bounds, line to gain**

Third-and-6 on B46. A1 runs to the B41 and fumbles. The ball goes out of bounds at the B39 where the officials spot the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-1 on B41, reset clock to the time when the ball touched out of bounds.

## SPOT OF FUMBLE

If on-field officials bring the ball back to the spot of the fumble when administering a fourth-down fumble, two-minute fumble, or fumble forward out of bounds, replay can review that spot. When a reversal of another reviewable aspect of a play creates a fourth-down, two-minute, or fumble forward out of bounds, replay will review the spot of the fumble as part of the administration after the review.

### NOT INVOLVING LINE TO GAIN/GOAL LINE

#### A.R. 15.87 Spot of fumble

Second-and-10 on B20. On the first play after the two-minute warning, A1 runs to the B12 and fumbles. A2 recovers at the B5-yard line. Officials move the ball to the B16-yard line instead of the B12.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball third-and-2 on B12. Reset the clock to the time when A2 recovered the loose ball and either team can elect to use a charged team timeout to avoid a 10-second runoff from that time. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

### LINE TO GAIN/GOAL LINE

#### A.R. 15.88 Fumble forward out of bounds, goal line

Third-and-12 on A2. Back A2 gets hit in the end zone and fumbles the ball which goes out of bounds at the A5. The officials bring the ball back to the A1 and spot the ball there.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Safety, SK A20, reset clock to the time when the ball touched out of bounds.

#### A.R. 15.89 Fourth-down fumble, line to gain

Fourth-and-5 on B25. A2 catches a pass and fumbles the ball at the B19-yard line. The ball is recovered by A3 at the B15. Officials bring the ball back to the B21-yard line and give the ball to B.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B19. Spot of fumble was beyond the line to gain, wind clock. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of the play because the on-field ruling was a turnover on downs.

#### A.R. 15.90 Fumble forward out of bounds, line to gain

Third-and-3 on A27. A2 runs to the A29 and fumbles the ball, and it rolls out of bounds at the A33. Officials bring the ball back to the A30 and award a first down to Team A.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-1 on A29, reset clock to the time when the ball touched out of bounds. Spot of fumble was behind the line to gain.

### SPOT OF FUMBLE AFTER REVERSAL

#### A.R. 15.91 QB pass/fumble

Fourth-and-10 on B20. QBA1 drops back to pass, is hit at the B27 where he loses the ball. A2 catches the ball in mid-air at the B25 and runs to the B5. Officials rule the play a pass, but replays show that A1 lost the ball before his arm started moving forward.

**Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B27, reset the clock to the time when A2 caught the ball. Reversal creates fourth-down fumble administration.

#### A.R. 15.92 Fumble forward out of bounds

First-and-10 on B20. A1 runs to the B18-yard line and fumbles. B2 recovers at the B15-yard line where the officials award Team B possession. Replays show that B2 had his foot on the sideline when recovering the ball.

**Ruling:** A's ball second-and-8 on B18, reset clock to the time when B2 recovered the ball. Reversal creates fumble forward out of bounds administration. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

## PASSING PLAYS

Whether a pass is complete or incomplete is always reviewable. This includes in the field of play, at a sideline, and in an end zone.

To complete a catch, there are three primary requirements that must be met. First, the player must gain a firm grip and control of the ball. Second, he must get two feet or another part of his body, other than his hands, on the ground inbounds. And, after these first two requirements have been met, he must perform an act common to the game or maintain control of the ball long enough to do so. If the player does not complete all three of the requirements, the pass is incomplete. These guidelines apply both on the field and in replay.

### PASSES IN FIELD OF PLAY

#### **A.R. 15.93      Process complete**

Third-and-5 on A30. Pass over the middle to the B45 is ruled incomplete. Replay shows that receiver A2 had his hands under the ball and it never hit the ground.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Pass is complete, A's ball first-and-10 on B45. Wind clock on ready.

#### **A.R. 15.94      Does not complete process**

Third-and-5 on A30. Pass over middle is ruled complete at the B45. Replays show that the ball hit the ground before the receiver gained control.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete pass. A's ball fourth-and-5 on A30. Reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground.

#### **A.R. 15.95      No advance allowed**

Third-and-10 on 50. Pass to the B30-yard line is close to the ground as defender B1 attempts to intercept it. B1 knocks the ball into the air, A2 catches it and runs for a touchdown, but the Back Judge comes in and rules the pass incomplete. Replays show that the ball never hit the ground.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B30. Reset the clock to the time when A2 caught the ball, and wind clock on the ready for play. In this situation, the ball is dead where A2 gained possession, and no advance can be given.

#### **A.R. 15.96      Pass Complete at goal line**

Second-and-5 on B15. A1 throws a pass to A2, who catches the ball at the B3 and dives into the end zone while being tackled by B1. Officials rule that A2's foot touched out of bounds and rule an incomplete pass. Team A challenges the ruling. Replays show that A2 controlled the ball with two feet inbounds at the B3-yard line and stretched the ball over the goal line while diving before being down by contact.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown A. Reset the clock to the time when the ball crossed the goal line. When creating a catch in replay, a touchdown can be awarded if the receiver takes fewer than two steps after catching the ball before crossing the goal line.

#### **A.R. 15.97      Ball touches ground without control before completing catch**

Third-and-5 on A30. Pass over middle is ruled complete at the B45. Replays show that the receiver controlled the ball while falling to the ground, but when his upper body hit, the nose of the ball touched the ground and then he lost control of it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete. A's ball fourth-and-5 on A30. Reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. Receiver is going to the ground and must maintain control of the ball until after his initial contact with the ground. If the ball touches the ground without control before the receiver completes the elements of a catch, the pass is incomplete.

#### **A.R. 15.98      Process complete before ball comes loose**

Third-and-10 on A20. Pass over the middle is ruled incomplete at the A30. The receiver controlled the pass, got both feet completely on the ground and after taking a third step was hit, causing him to fall and lose control of the ball when he fell to the ground.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Completed pass and down by contact. A's ball first-and-10 on A30. The receiver had completed the catch and was down by contact before the ball came loose.

#### **A.R. 15.99      Process complete before losing ball comes loose**

Third-and-10 on A20. Pass over the middle is ruled incomplete at the A30. The receiver controlled the pass with one foot down and was then contacted by a defender. As he went to the ground, he got his second foot down and then, still in control of the ball, he reached out for the line to gain, losing the ball when he fell to the ground.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Completed pass and down by contact. A's ball first-and-10 on A30. The receiver controlled the ball, took two steps, and performed an act common to the game when he reached out for the line to gain.

#### **A.R. 15.100      Possession of pass**

First-and-10 on A20. Both A2 and B3 jump up to catch a pass at the A45. Both players go to the ground and A2 ends up with the ball and the pass is ruled complete. Replays show that B3 completed the catch and A2 pulled it free after both players were on the ground. Team B attempts to challenge that the pass was intercepted.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on A45. Reset the clock to the time when B3 was down by contact. This play is reviewable in the field of play and the end zone. Can also review whether the pass was complete or incomplete.

#### **A.R. 15.101      Simultaneous catch**

First-and-10 on A20. Both A2 and B3 jump up to catch a pass at the A45. Both players go to the ground and B3 ends up with the ball and the pass is ruled intercepted. Replays show that the catch was simultaneous.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A45. Reset the clock to the time when A2 caught the ball and was down by contact, and wind clock on the ready for play. A simultaneous catch in the field of play is reviewable. Can also review whether the pass was complete or incomplete. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

## **PASSES AT SIDELINE**

### **A.R. 15.102 Both feet down inbounds**

Third-and-10 on A30. A2 controls a pass near the sideline and gets both feet down inbounds at the 50-yard line and maintains control as he goes out of bounds. The officials rule the pass incomplete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on 50. Completed pass.

### **A.R. 15.103 Foot drag, pass complete**

Third-and-10 on A30. A2 controls a pass and gets his left foot down in bounds at the 50. As his right foot comes down, he drags his toes inbounds and then the foot hits out of bounds. Officials rule incomplete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on 50. Completed pass.

### **A.R. 15.104 Heel/toe**

Third-and-10 on A30. A2 controls a pass and gets his left foot down in bounds at the 50. As his right foot comes down, the heel hits in bounds and in the normal motion of taking a step, his toes hit out of bounds. Officials rule complete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-10 on A30. Incomplete. Adjust clock if wound before review. If any part of the foot hits out of bounds during the normal process of taking a step (no drag or delay), then the foot is out of bounds.

### **A.R. 15.105 No force-out**

Second-and-10 on 50. Pass goes to A2 near the sideline at the B35. A2 controls the ball while airborne, but before he can get both feet down, he is knocked out of bounds by defender B3 where he maintains control of the ball when he lands. Official rules complete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete pass. A's ball third-and-10 on 50. Adjust clock if wound before review. For the pass to be complete in this situation, the receiver must be carried out of bounds by the defender.

### **A.R. 15.106 Receiver who is out of bounds making catch**

First-and-10 on A20. Wide Receiver A1 leaps and catches a legal forward pass at the 50 and runs for a touchdown. Replays show A1's left foot on the sideline right before he jumped.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete pass, A's ball second-and-10 on A20. Reset game clock to the time when the receiver touched the ball. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

### **A.R. 15.107 Pass complete, no advance**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a pass to A2 who leaps at the A35-yard line near the sideline, makes the catch and runs for a touchdown. Officials rule A2 was out of bounds before making the catch and did not reestablish in bounds, making the pass incomplete. Replays show that A2 was never out of bounds.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Complete pass. A's ball first-and-10 on A35. On these plays, replay can award a catch, but not the advance, since the original ruling was incomplete. Reset the clock to the time when A2 caught the ball, and wind clock on the ready for play.

### **A.R. 15.108 Receiver loses control, ball hits ground**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a pass to A2 at the A35-yard line near the sideline. A2 gains control of the ball and gets both feet down in bounds, but does not perform an act common to the game as he falls to the ground, where he loses the ball when he hits the ground. Officials rule complete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete Pass. A's ball second-and-10 on A20. Reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. Receiver did not complete all elements of the catch before losing control when he contacted the ground.

### **A.R. 15.109 Receiver loses control at sideline, ball does not hit ground**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a pass to A2 at the A35 near the sideline. A2 gains control of the ball and gets two feet down in bounds but does not perform an act common to the game as he falls to the ground out of bounds. A2 momentarily loses control of the ball when he hits the ground out of bounds. He regains control before the ball touches the ground. Officials rule complete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete Pass. A's ball second-and-10 on A20. Adjust clock if wound before review. Receiver did not complete all elements of the catch, so he must maintain control of the ball through his contact with the ground. If he is touching the sideline, any loss of control during the process of the catch makes the pass incomplete.

### **A.R. 15.110 Defender out of bounds**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a pass to A2 near the sideline at the A35. A2 and B2 jump up to catch the pass, A2 comes down inbounds, but B2's left foot hits the sideline before the rest of his body lands in bounds. Officials rule an incomplete pass.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A35. Because A2 completed the process of the catch inbounds and was in control of the ball when B2 touched the sideline, this is a completed pass.

## **PASSER RULED DOWN BY CONTACT OR OUT OF BOUNDS**

### **A.R. 15.111 Down by contact**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 scrambles to the A17 where he is hit by B3 and stumbles as he releases a pass that falls incomplete at the A30. The Referee rules that the A1's left knee was down before he released the ball. Replays show that he was still up when he threw the pass.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Second-and-10 on A20. Replay can make this an incomplete pass, completion, or interception, but cannot award an advance.

### **A.R. 15.112 Out of bounds**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 scrambles near the sideline to the A17 and throws a pass that is caught by A2 at the A30. The Referee rules that the QB's left foot was out of bounds before he released the ball. Replays show that his foot was not out of bounds.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. First-and-10 on A30. Replay can make this an incomplete pass, completion, or interception, but cannot award an advance.

## PASS COMPLETE/FUMBLE OR INCOMPLETE

Replay can review whether a pass was complete followed by a fumble, or instead, the receiver did not gain possession of the ball and it should be incomplete.

If a player has firm control of the ball with two feet or another body part (other than his hands) touching down inbounds, and then performs an act common to the game before losing it, it is a catch and fumble. If the receiver loses the ball simultaneously or near simultaneously with the second foot coming down (bang-bang), the pass is incomplete.

When a pass is ruled incomplete, either team can challenge that it was a catch and fumble and that they gained possession of the ball. If replays show that it was a catch and fumble, the ball will be awarded at the spot of recovery to the team that recovers the ball in the immediate continuing action. If on-field officials make a preliminary ruling of which team recovered the ball, that preliminary ruling constitutes a clear recovery. If there is no clear recovery, the ball will be awarded to the team last in possession at the spot where possession was lost. On fourth down or after the two-minute warning, the ball will be brought back to the spot of the fumble if recovered beyond it by a teammate of the fumbling player.

## ACT COMMON TO THE GAME

### A.R. 15.113 Receiver performs an act common to the game

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a forward pass to A2 at the A35-yard line. A2 catches it and is hit by a defender causing him to lose the ball, and B3 falls on it at the A35. Officials rule the pass complete and a fumble. Replays show the receiver had control, two feet completely down, and turned up field before he was hit causing him to lose the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, if the receiver secures control of the ball, touches the ground with two feet or another body part (other than his hands), and then performs an act common to the game before losing control of the ball, it is a catch and fumble in the field of play. B's ball first-and-10 on A35. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

### A.R. 15.114 Receiver performs act common to the game

Second-and-9 on A18. QBA1 throws a pass to A2 at the A31. A2 controls the ball and just as his second foot touches the ground, he is contacted by a defender, and he then takes a third step while being tackled. Before the receiver hits the ground, the defender pulls the ball loose. B3 recovers the loose ball at the A35. Officials rule incomplete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Completed pass and fumble. B's ball first-and-10 on A35. Because the receiver secured control, took two steps, and then took a third step, the process of the catch was complete before the ball came loose.

### A.R. 15.115 Receiver does not perform an act common to the game

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a forward pass to A2 at the A28 who takes two steps and immediately gets hit by a defender causing him to lose the ball and B3 falls on it at the A35. Officials rule the pass complete and a fumble. Replays show that the receiver lost the ball just as his second foot hit the ground.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, incomplete pass. A's ball second-and-10 on A20, reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

## BALL CONTROL

### A.R. 15.116 Does not establish control, incomplete

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a forward pass to A2 at the A28 who takes two steps and gets hit by a defender. The ball comes out and B3 falls on it. Officials rule the pass complete and a fumble and give the ball to B. Replays show that A2 did not secure control of the ball before he got hit.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete pass, A's ball second-and-10 on A20. Reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground and start on snap. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

## POSSESSION AFTER FUMBLE

### A.R. 15.117 Clear recovery

Second-and-6 on B35. QBA1 throws a forward pass to A2 at the B27 who takes three steps and then is hit by a defender, causing him to lose the ball and B3 falls on it at the B25. Officials rule the pass incomplete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, B's ball first-and-10 on B25. The defense can gain possession if there is evidence of a clear recovery.

### A.R. 15.118 Completed pass, no clear recovery

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a forward pass to A2 near the sideline. A2 gains control of the ball, takes two steps, turns up field, and is then hit by a defender causing him to lose the ball at the A40. The loose ball is not recovered by any player. Officials rule the pass incomplete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, A's ball first-and-10 on A40, wind clock. There is no clear recovery, so the ball is awarded to Team A at the spot where possession was lost.

## PASSES IN END ZONE

The rules regarding whether a pass is complete or incomplete in the field of play also apply to the end zone. The only difference is that a player cannot catch and fumble the ball in his opponent's end zone, since the play is over once he completes the catch.

### ACT COMMON TO THE GAME

#### **A.R. 15.119 Performs an act common to the game**

First-and-goal on B5. A1 clearly controls a pass in the end zone with both hands above his head, gets two feet completely down and tucks the ball under his arm before B3 knocks it loose. Officials rule the pass incomplete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown. Reset the clock to the time when A1 caught the ball. If the receiver maintains control of the ball long enough to perform an act common to the game, then it is a catch and score.

#### **A.R. 15.120 Process complete before losing control**

First-and-goal on B5. A1 clearly controls a pass in the end zone, gets two feet completely down, tucks the ball and starts to turn before he is hit by a defender, causing him to go to the ground where he loses possession of the ball. Officials rule the pass incomplete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown. If the receiver maintains control of the ball long enough to perform an act common to the game before he loses control of the ball, it is a catch and score.

#### **A.R. 15.121 Does not perform an act common to the game**

First-and-goal on B5. A1 clearly controls a pass in the end zone, gets one foot down and just as his second foot hits the ground, he loses the ball and remains upright. Officials rule the pass incomplete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-goal on B5. Incomplete pass. In this situation, the receiver did not perform an act common to the game, or maintain control of the ball long enough to do so, after his second foot touched the ground.

#### **A.R. 15.122 Must perform an act common to the game after touching the ground with two feet or another body part**

First-and-goal on B5. A1 controls a pass near the goal line, gets one foot down, and stretches the ball out over the goal line. The ball is knocked loose just as his second foot touches the ground. The officials rule the pass complete and award a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete pass. A receiver must perform an act common to the game after touching the ground with two feet or a body part other than his hands. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

### PYLON

#### **A.R. 15.123 Body part touching pylon**

Third-and-10 on B25. Wide receiver A2 controls a pass and gets his left foot down inbounds in the field of play, but replays show that his right foot hits the pylon before hitting the ground inbounds in the end zone with the ball breaking the plane of the goal line. Officials rule incomplete pass.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown. Touching a pylon with any part of his body does not put a player out of bounds.

#### **A.R. 15.124 Ball touching pylon while in player control**

Third-and-10 on B25. Wide receiver A2 controls a pass and gets his left foot down inbounds in the field of play. He reaches for the pylon and the ball touches it before his right foot comes down inbounds in the end zone. Officials rule an incomplete pass.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown. Reset the clock to the time when A2's second foot touched the ground. When a loose ball in player control touches a pylon, it is not out of bounds even though the process of the catch is not yet complete (3-20-3). If the ball was not in player control, it would be incomplete.

### FORWARD PROGRESS IN END ZONE

#### **A.R. 15.125 Driven back into field of play, maintains control**

Third-and-goal on B5. Airborne receiver A2 controls a pass in the end zone where he gets contacted by a defender and driven back into the field of play where he lands and holds onto the ball. Officials rule pass complete at the B1-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown A. If the receiver completes the catch, he will be awarded a TD. Reset the clock to the time when A2 completed the catch.

#### **A.R. 15.126 Continuous control after contact**

Third-and-goal on B5. Airborne receiver A2 controls a pass in the end zone where he gets contacted by a defender and driven back into the field of play where he falls to the ground. When A2 got hit, he lost control of the ball and did not regain it until he landed on the ground at the B1. Replays show that the ball did not hit the ground. Officials rule TD.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-goal on B1. Reset the clock to the time when A2 was down by contact, and wind the clock on the ready for play. The receiver must maintain continuous control after the contact in order to be awarded a score in this situation. If the ball hit the ground while loose, it would be an incomplete pass if the receiver did not complete the elements of a catch. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.127 No forward progress**

Third-and-goal on B5. Airborne receiver A2 controls a pass in the end zone and comes back into the field of play, untouched by a defender, where he lands and is tackled at the B2-yard line. Officials rule TD.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-goal on B2. Reset the clock to the time when A2 was down by contact, and wind the clock on the ready for play. Since the receiver was airborne and came back into the field of play on his own, he must get the ball back into the end zone for it to be a TD. If he got two feet down in the end zone with control and the ball breaking the plane of the goal line, then it would be a touchdown even though he completed the process of the catch in the field of play. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.



## QB PASS OR FUMBLE

Replay can always review whether a player threw a forward pass or fumbled. If the passer's hand comes forward in an obvious forward passing motion with control of the ball, it is considered a forward pass until he begins to bring the ball back toward his body. Once he starts to bring the ball back to his body, any subsequent loss of control is a fumble.

If there is a fumble that is ruled an incomplete pass, the ball will be awarded at the spot of recovery to the team that recovers the ball in the immediate continuing action. If on-field officials make a preliminary ruling of which team recovered the ball, that preliminary ruling constitutes a clear recovery. If there is no clear recovery, the ball will be awarded to the team last in possession at the spot where possession was lost, except that if possession was lost in the team's own end zone, and the ball was not clearly recovered in the end zone, the ball will be placed at the one-yard line. No advance will be given. If a fumble in the end zone occurs on fourth down or after the two-minute warning, it would be a safety even if recovered in the field of play if the fumbling player clearly did not recover the ball.

### HAND COMING FORWARD

#### A.R. 15.128 Hand coming forward with control

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 is hit while passing and loses the ball. B1 recovers the ball and returns it for a touchdown. Replays show A1's hand going forward with control of the ball and that he lost it before he began to bring it back to his body.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete forward pass, A's ball second-and-10 on A20. Reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### A.R. 15.129 Fumble

First-and-10 on B20. QBA1 starts to bring his hand forward to throw a forward pass to receiver A3. After realizing that A3 is covered, A1 starts to bring the ball back toward his body, but before he gets it all the way back, he loses it and B77 recovers at the B27. The Referee rules an incomplete pass.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Fumble, B's ball first-and-10 on B27. Reset the clock to the time when B77 recovered the fumble.

### CLEAR RECOVERY

#### A.R. 15.130 Fumble with clear recovery, no advance allowed

Second-and-10 on A25. QBA1 is hit at the A22 while attempting to throw a forward pass. The ball hits the ground at the A20 and B1 recovers it there and starts to run with it, but the Referee rules incomplete pass. Replays show it was a fumble.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on A20, no advance allowed.

#### A.R. 15.131 No clear recovery

Second-and-12 on A8. QBA1 is hit while attempting to throw a forward pass, the ball hits the ground, and the Referee rules it an incomplete pass. The ball was thrown from: (a) the end zone; or (b) from the A2. The loose ball goes into a pile of players from both teams at the A5. Replays show that it was a fumble. B challenges the play.

#### Rulings:

(a) Reviewable. A's ball third-and-19 on A1. Although possession was lost in the end zone, the ball was recovered in the field of play even though it is not clear which team recovered the ball, so Team A is awarded the ball at the A1-yard line. If the ball was clearly recovered in the end zone, it would be a safety. Team B is not charged a timeout. If this play occurs on fourth down or after the two-minute warning, it would be a safety if QBA1 clearly did not recover the ball.

(b) Reviewable. A's ball third-and-18 on A2. Because there is no clear recovery, Team A is awarded the ball at the spot where possession was lost. Team B is not charged a timeout.

### PASSING MOTION

#### A.R. 15.132 No forward passing motion

Second-and-10 on A20. QBA1 is under pressure, and he brings the ball up towards his head to avoid a defender. He gets hit and the impact causes his hand to go forward, and he loses the ball and B recovers at the A17. Officials rule fumble.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, B's ball first-and-10 on A17. The QB was not attempting to pass when he lost the ball, so it is a fumble regardless of whether his hand went forward or not. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

### CANNOT CREATE FOUL AFTER REVERSAL

#### A.R. 15.133 Intentional grounding

Second-and-10 on A20. QBA1 who is standing in the pocket at the A15 throws the ball into the ground at the A23 to avoid a sack. There are no eligible receivers in the area where the ball hit the ground. The Referee rules fumble and B3 recovers the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, A's ball third-and-10 on A20, reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. This is an incomplete pass, but replay cannot create a foul for intentional grounding. The only way a foul for intentional grounding can be enforced in this situation is if the Referee threw his flag and picked it up, or before the review made an announcement that grounding would be enforced if the fumble ruling is reversed to an incomplete pass. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

### QB SPIKE TO CONSERVE TIME

#### A.R. 15.134 QB spike

First-and-10 on B33. After completing a pass in the field of play, Team A lines up and QBA1 attempts to spike the ball to stop the clock. He loses control of the ball before his hand comes forward and it hits the ground where B7 recovers it. The Referee rules incomplete pass.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B33. Replay can award possession to the recovering team in this situation. If there is no clear recovery, Team A is awarded the ball at the spot of the fumble and there would be a 10-second runoff if the snap happened after the two-minute warning. On an attempted QB spike, replay can review whether it was a pass or a fumble, but cannot review whether the pass was forward or backward.



## FORWARD/BACKWARD PASSES, ILLEGAL FORWARD PASSES, AND HANDOFFS

All illegal forward passes and handoffs are reviewable. Whether a pass is forward or backward is always reviewable. A pass is forward if it first touches the ground, or anything else, at a point that is nearer the opponent's goal line than the point where the ball leaves the passer's hand. If it is parallel, it is a backward pass. Also, if the quarterback begins his throwing motion and then is hit by a defender, it is considered a forward pass if he passes the ball, even if the ball goes backward.

If a backward pass is ruled forward and incomplete on the field, after review, the ball will be awarded at the spot of recovery to the team that recovers the ball in the immediate continuing action. If on-field officials make a preliminary ruling of which team recovered the ball, that preliminary ruling constitutes a clear recovery. If there is no clear recovery, the ball will be awarded to the team last in possession at the spot where possession was lost. If the ball goes out of bounds through an end zone, it is either a touchback or a safety. If there is no clear recovery, but the ball clearly is recovered in the end zone of the team that threw the backward pass, it is a safety.

### FORWARD/BACKWARD PASS

#### **A.R. 15.135 Backward pass, clear recovery**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a pass from the A15-yard line that is ruled forward and incomplete. B7 thinking the pass was backward, falls on the loose ball at the A14. Replays show the pass was backward, hitting the ground at the A14.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on A14. The defense can gain possession of the ball with a clear recovery.

#### **A.R. 15.136 Backward pass, no clear recovery**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a pass from the A15-yard line that is ruled forward and incomplete. Several players from both teams jump on the loose ball. B7 emerges from the pile with the ball, but on-field officials do not make a preliminary ruling on recovery. Replays show the pass was backward, hitting the ground at the A14-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-15 on A15. Because there is no evidence of clear recovery, the ball is awarded to Team A at the spot of the backward pass.

#### **A.R. 15.137 Backward pass following interception, no clear recovery in end zone**

Second-and-5 on B25. On the first series of Overtime, QBA1 throws a long pass to A2, which is intercepted by B1 in the end zone. B1 runs the ball out to the B5-yard line and attempts to throw a backward pass to teammate B2. The attempted backward pass hits the ground at the B4-yard line and rolls into the end zone where players from both teams attempt to recover the ball in a pile of players. Officials rule that B1 threw an illegal forward pass and award the ball to Team B. Replays show that the pass was backward. The Replay Official reviews the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Safety. Game over. Team A wins. There is no clear recovery by Team A, so a touchdown cannot be awarded. However, someone recovered the ball in the end zone, so it is at least a safety. The on-field ruling of an illegal forward pass is therefore reversed to a safety.

#### **A.R. 15.138 Backward pass out of bounds**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a pass from the A15-yard line that is ruled forward and incomplete. After hitting the ground, the ball goes out of bounds at the A12-yard line. Replays show the pass was backward, hitting the ground at the A14-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-18 on A12, wind clock on ready. In this situation, the ball will be placed at the out of bounds spot. The ball going out of bounds is a clear recovery.

#### **A.R. 15.139 Backward pass out of bounds, safety**

First-and-10 on A5. QBA1 throws a pass from the A3-yard line that is ruled forward and incomplete. After hitting the ground, the ball hit the goal line pylon. Replays show the pass was backward, hitting the ground at the A1.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Safety, safety kick A20.

#### **A.R. 15.140 Incomplete forward pass**

Second-and-10 on A40. QBA1 throws a pass from the A35 toward the sideline. It hits the ground at the A36 and is recovered by B56. The Line Judge rules the pass backward.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, A's ball third-and-10 on A40, reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.141 Forward pass, no grounding**

Second-and-10 on B37. QBA1 who is in the pocket and under pressure at the B44 throws the ball towards the sideline and it hits the ground at the B43 and then goes out of bounds. There was no eligible receiver in the area when it hit the ground. The Line Judge rules the pass backward. Team A challenges that the pass was forward.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, A's ball third-and-10 on B37. Reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. In this situation, replay can overturn the ruling to a forward pass, but cannot create a foul for intentional grounding. If officials had thrown a flag initially for intentional grounding and then picked it up because of the LJ's ruling, then replay can put the flag back down, or if the Referee made an announcement regarding grounding before the review, the foul would be enforced after the reversal.

#### **A.R. 15.142 Reversal negates foul**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a swing pass to back A2 at the A18 who runs out of bounds at the A26. Officials rule the pass forward and call tight end A3 for pass interference as he was blocking downfield before the pass was caught. Replays show that the pass was backward.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, A's ball second-and-4 on A26. Since the pass was backward, there is no foul for pass interference. This would also apply to a foul called for an ineligible player illegally downfield.

**A.R. 15.143 Throwing motion affected**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 is under pressure at the A17 and attempts to throw a forward pass to A2 near the sideline at the A24. He starts his throwing motion but is then contacted by B77 before passing the ball. The ball lands at the A14 where B99 falls on it. The Referee rules incomplete pass.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, A's ball second-and-10 on A20. If the quarterback begins his throwing motion and is then contacted by a defender, causing the pass to go backward, it is still a forward pass.

**ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS****A.R. 15.144 Passer beyond the line of scrimmage**

First-and-10 on B20. QBA1 scrambles and throws a pass from the B19 that is caught by receiver A8 for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Illegal forward pass. A's ball second-and-14 on B24. For it to be an illegal forward pass, the passer's whole body and the ball must be over the line of scrimmage when he releases the ball. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.145 Pass behind line of scrimmage after ball has been beyond it**

First-and-10 on B20. QBA1 scrambles to the B19 and then back to the B21 where he throws a pass that is caught by receiver A80 in B's end zone for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Illegal forward pass. A's ball second-and-15 on B25. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.146 Two forward passes behind the line of scrimmage**

First-and-10 on B30. Shotgun QBA1 pitches back to A2 who runs toward the sideline, stops and throws a pass to QBA1 who then throws a forward pass to A4 for a TD. Officials rule the play legal. Replays show that A2 was standing on the B36 when he released the ball and QBA1 was on the B34 when he caught it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-15 on B35. Second forward pass is illegal. Previous spot foul and loss of down. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.147 Illegal forward pass beyond line of scrimmage**

Second-and-10 on A20. A2 catches a forward pass at the 50 and runs to the B20-yard line where he throws the ball forward to A3 at the B18-yard line. A3 runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Illegal forward pass. A's ball first-and-10 on B25. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.148 Backward pass with clear recovery**

Second-and-10 on A20. B2 intercepts a pass at the A40 and returns it to the A30 where he attempts to throw a pass to B3 at the A31. The ball hits the ground at the A31 and A7 falls on it there. The officials rule that B2's pass was forward and give B the ball after enforcing a five-yard penalty from the A30.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A31. Since the pass was backward and was recovered in the continuing action after it hit the ground, the ball is awarded to Team A. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**ILLEGAL FORWARD HANDOFF****A.R. 15.149 Player not in advance of teammate**

Second-and-10 on A20. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the 50. As he is being tackled, he hands the ball to A3 who is running parallel with him. A3 initially touches the ball at the 50 but doesn't control it until the B48 ahead of A2. A3 runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Legal handoff, touchdown. For it to be illegal, the player receiving the handoff must be clearly in advance of the player making the handoff when he first touches the ball. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

## TOUCHING OF PASS

Replay can review whether a pass was touched or not. This includes by eligible or ineligible players. Only the aspect of touching, and not intent, is reviewable.

### ORIGINALLY INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

#### **A.R. 15.150 No foul, player does not touch ball**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 is under pressure and attempts to throw a pass to back A2. Guard A6 is in front of A2 and reaches out to catch the ball, but it falls incomplete. Officials call Guard A6 for illegal touching of the pass. Replays show that A6 did not touch the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. No foul. Second-and-10 on A20.

#### **A.R. 15.151 Cannot rule on intent**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a pass towards A2 that glances off the left arm of Guard A6 and then is caught by A2 who runs to the 50. Officials call A6 for illegal touching.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-15 on A15. Replay can only review whether the player touched it or not, and cannot look at whether there was intent to touch. The Referee should explain this to the coach if he wants to challenge the ruling.

#### **A.R. 15.152 T-Formation Quarterback**

First-and-10 on A20. T-Formation QBA1 receives the snap and pitches back to A2. A2 runs to his right and throws a forward pass to A1 who catches it and runs for a TD.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Illegal touching of a forward pass. A's ball first-and-15 on A15. T-Formation Quarterback (under center) is always ineligible. Whether a QB was in T-Formation for purposes of eligibility is reviewable regardless of whether a foul was ruled on the field. The pass must be touched intentionally to be a foul in this situation, but the intent aspect is not reviewable, just the touch. A receiver catching the ball is considered intentional. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

### ELIGIBLE RECEIVER OUT OF BOUNDS

#### **A.R. 15.153 Illegal touching of pass**

First-and-10 on A20. Wide receiver A1 catches a pass at the 50 and runs for a touchdown. Replays show A1 stepping on the sideline at the A35-yard line and reestablishing inbounds before the catch.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Illegal touching of a forward pass. Second-and-10 on A20. The pass does not have to be touched intentionally to be a foul in this situation. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.154 Defensive Pass Interference**

First-and-10 on A20. A1 throws a pass toward receiver A2, who is being defended by B1 near the sideline at the A35-yard line. The pass falls incomplete, untouched by either player. Officials rule defensive pass interference. Replays show that A1 stepped on the sideline at the A30-yard line and reestablished inbounds before the interference.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-10 on A20. There is no foul for pass interference because A2 became an ineligible receiver when he stepped out of bounds.

#### **A.R. 15.155 Defensive pass interference**

Third-and-10 on A30. Pass to A2 is incomplete, but B1 is called for defensive pass interference as he played through the back of the receiver at the A40. B attempts to challenge that B1 touched the pass before the contact.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A40. In order to negate the foul, the touch must occur away from the interference and by a player other than the one who caused the interference.

#### **A.R. 15.156 No foul**

First-and-10 on A20. A1 throws a pass to A2 near the sideline. A2 catches the pass inbounds and then is tackled at the 50, but he is flagged for illegally touching the pass. Replays show that A2 did not step out of bounds before touching the ball.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. No foul for illegal touching. A's ball first-and-10 on 50. Reset the clock to the time when A2 was down by contact.

### FIRST TOUCH

#### **A.R. 15.157 Pass touched first by an eligible player**

Second-and-10 on A20. QBA1 overthrows a screen pass to back A2 and the ball is then caught by Guard A5 who runs out of bounds at the A30. Officials call Guard A5 for illegal touching. Replays show that A2 tipped the pass before A5 caught it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. No foul, A's ball first-and-10 on A30.

### TOUCHING OF PASS BY DEFENSIVE PLAYER

#### **A.R. 15.158 Defensive pass interference**

Third-and-10 on A30. Pass to A2 is incomplete, but B1 is called for defensive pass interference at the A40. Replays show the pass was tipped at the line of scrimmage by B2 before the interference.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. No foul. A's ball fourth-and-10 on A30. For the foul to be negated, the ball must be touched before the interference and by a player away from the action that creates the foul.

#### **A.R. 15.159 Foul occurs before touch**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1 throws a pass to A2 at the A35. The BJ rules DPI, but the flag is picked up because the officials rule the ball was touched by B at the line of scrimmage before the foul. Replays show that the DPI occurred before the touching.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Defensive pass interference, A's ball first-and-10 on A35. This would be the same ruling if the officials ruled the pass was touched and replays showed that it was not touched.

## **NON-REVIEWABLE SITUATIONS INVOLVING TOUCHING OF PASS**

### **A.R. 15.160 Player ineligible by formation**

First-and-10 on A20. Flanker A1 moves up on to the line of scrimmage and covers up tight end A2, making him ineligible. A2 goes downfield and catches a pass at the 50. No flags on the play.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on 50.

### **A.R. 15.161 Illegal contact**

First-and-10 on A20. After stepping out of bounds at the A38 and immediately reestablishing, wide receiver A1 catches a pass at the 50 and runs for a touchdown. Officials penalize A for illegal touching of a forward pass. Replays show that A1 was illegally chucked out of bounds beyond 5 yards.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. Illegal contact is not reviewable. A's ball second-and-10 on A20. The only thing replay can review on this play is whether the receiver stepped out and reestablished before he touched the pass.

### **A.R. 15.162 Illegal bat**

Second-and-10 on A47. A1 leaps high in the air at the B40 and grabs the pass. Before A1's feet touch the ground, he pitches the ball forward to A2 at the B38-yard line. A2 runs for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. An illegal bat is not reviewable, even in the end zone.

## SCORING PLAYS

Replay can review the status of the ball in relation to the goal line, going in or coming out. This includes where a fumble occurs in relation to the goal line. Replay can also review recovery of a loose ball and simultaneous possession in the field of play and in the end zone.

The Replay Official is responsible for initiating a replay review on all plays that result in a score, or where a score was nullified by a penalty. This will apply throughout the entire game and replay is responsible for looking at all reviewable aspects of the play.

### GOAL LINE

#### **A.R. 15.163 Down by contact**

Third-and-goal on B1. A1 dives over the goal line, but is ruled down short by the officials. Replays show A1 extending the ball beyond the goal line before being down.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown. Reset the clock to the time when the ball broke the plane of the goal line.

#### **A.R. 15.164 Touchdown with control and touching ground in end zone**

Second-and-goal on B2. With 1:30 remaining in the game and Team A trailing by four points, QBA1 throws a pass to A2 at the goal line. A2 catches the ball and lands at the B1, where officials spot the ball. Replays show that A2 controlled the ball with the ball breaking the plane with two feet on the ground in the end zone and that A2 fell back into the field of play without being contacted by a defender. A2 maintained control of the ball through his contact with the ground. The Replay Official reviews the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown. Reset the clock to the time when A2 controlled the ball with both feet on the ground. A player who controls a ball that is breaking the plane with two feet or another body part touching the ground scores a touchdown if they complete the process of the catch.

#### **A.R. 15.165 Forward progress**

Third-and-goal on B2. A1 takes a hand off and gets hit near the goal line and driven back to the B3-yard line where he is tackled. The officials rule touchdown. Replays show that the ball did not break the plane of the goal line and was at the 1-yard line when A1's progress was stopped.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. No touchdown, A's ball fourth-and-goal on B1. Reset the clock to the time when A1's progress was stopped, and wind the clock on the ready for play. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.166 Player down in end zone, safety**

Third-and-17 on A3. QBA1 is sacked near the goal line. Officials rule A1 down at the one. Replays show that part of the ball was breaking the plane of the goal line when A1 was first down.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Safety, reset the clock to the time when A1 was down by contact. Safety kick A20.

#### **A.R. 15.167 Forward progress, safety**

Third-and-10 on A5. QBA1 is hit at the goal line and driven into the end zone. Officials rule forward progress at the A1. Replays show that when A1's progress was stopped, part of the ball was breaking the plane of the goal line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Safety, reset the clock to the time when A1 was down by contact. Safety kick A20. For it not to be a safety, the entire ball must be beyond the goal line when forward progress is stopped.

#### **A.R. 15.168 Forward progress, no safety**

Third-and-10 on A5. QBA1 is hit at the A1 and driven backwards into the end zone. Officials rule a safety. Replays show QBA1 was first contacted at the A1 and was continuously contacted while being driven into the end zone.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, A's ball fourth-and-14 on A1. Reset the clock to the time when A1's progress was stopped, and wind the clock on the ready for play. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.169 Fumble at the goal line**

First-and-goal on B5. A1 runs to the goal line and the officials rule touchdown. Replays show that A1 fumbled before crossing the goal line and the ball went out of bounds through the end zone.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchback, B first-and-10 on B20. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.170 Fumble at the goal line, clear recovery**

First-and-goal on B9. A1 runs to the goal line and the officials rule TD. Replays show that A1 fumbled before crossing the goal line and the ball was clearly recovered by B3 in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchback. B first-and-10 on B20. There must be a clear recovery by the defense in order to reverse to a touchback. The ball will be placed at the spot of the recovery and here that results in a touchback. If there is no clear recovery or there is a long delay with players stopping before the ball is recovered, then the offense retains possession (unless it was fourth down and the fumble occurred before the line to gain) and the ball will be placed at the spot of the fumble. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### **A.R. 15.171 Backward pass at goal line**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1's pass is intercepted by B20 who returns it to A's goal line. The officials rule TD. Replays show that before B20 crossed the goal line, he threw the ball backward thinking he had already scored. A2 immediately jumped on the loose ball at the A2.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A2. Reset the clock to the time when A2 recovered the ball. This is treated the same way as a fumble at the goal line. If the ball is clearly recovered, replay can give it to the recovering team. If the ball goes out of bounds through the end zone, it is a touchback. If there is no clear recovery or the ball does not go out of bounds, the team which

had the ball keeps possession at the spot where the fumbling player lost control of the ball (unless it was fourth down and the line to gain was not reached). Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.172 Illegal forward pass**

Second-and-10 on B46. A1 takes a handoff and runs to the goal line. When he gets to the goal line, he spikes the ball thinking he has scored a TD. Officials rule that he did score. Replays show that he spiked the ball at the one-yard line before it broke the plane, and it hit the ground in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-goal on B6. Reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. This is an illegal forward pass, and the ball is dead when it hits the ground. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**PLAYS INVOLVING PYLON**

**A.R. 15.173 Ball inside or over pylon**

Third-and-goal on B5. A1 runs near the sideline to the B1-yard line, dives for the goal line and lands out of bounds. The officials rule the ball did not cross inside or over the pylon and mark him out at the B½-yard line. Replays show that while airborne A1 was crossing the sideline, he extended the ball over the pylon.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, TD. Reset the clock to the time of the touchdown if it was wound before the review. For an airborne player who lands out of bounds to be awarded a score, part of the ball must pass over or inside the pylon before the player touches out of bounds.

**A.R. 15.174 Goal line extended**

First-and-10 on B18. A3 takes a handoff, breaks through the line and angles towards the goal line pylon with the ball in his outside arm. He crosses the goal line with his feet inbounds in the end zone, but the ball crosses the plane outside the pylon, and he continues out of bounds on his feet. Officials rule out of bounds at the 1-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, touchdown. Reset the clock to the time of the touchdown if it was wound before the review. If part of the runner's body comes down in the end zone before he touches out of bounds, then the ball does not have to pass over or inside the pylon. The ball must still break the plane of the goal line extended before he touches out of bounds.

**OUT OF BOUNDS**

**A.R. 15.175 Player not out of bounds**

First-and-10 on B17. A1 runs to the B1-yard line near the sideline and dives for the goal line. The officials rule that his right foot stepped out of bounds at the one just before he dove for the line. Replays show that A1's right foot was in bounds and the ball broke the plane of the goal line inside the pylon during his dive.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown. Reset the clock to the time of the touchdown if it was wound before the review. Even though the officials ruled the player stepped out of bounds, if he did not step out and he took fewer than two steps to get into the end zone, replay can reverse to a score. If the runner took two or more steps after being ruled out of bounds, the on-field ruling stands.

**RECOVERY OF LOOSE BALL**

**A.R. 15.176 Recovery in relation to the goal line**

First-and-10 on A4. A2 fumbles and B1 recovers at the goal line. Officials give the ball to B at the A1-yard line. Replays show that B1 recovered the ball in the end zone.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown B. Where the player recovered in relation to a boundary line (sideline, end line, or goal line) is reviewable. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.177 Recovery between opponents in end zone**

First-and-10 on A2. A2 takes a handoff and fumbles when hit by B3. B4 jumps on the loose ball in the end zone, possesses it on the ground, but then A2 pulls the ball out of B4's hands and A3 recovers the loose ball in the end zone. Officials rule A recovered for a safety.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown B. B had possession of the ball in the end zone before A pulled it loose. Reset the clock to the time when B4 completed the recovery. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**POSSESSION OF A PASS**

**A.R. 15.178 Possession between players**

First-and-goal on B5. A1 and B1 go up in the air together to catch a pass in the end zone. Officials rule interception. Replays show that A1 caught the pass.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.179 Simultaneous catch**

First-and-goal on B5. A1 and B1 go up in the air together to catch a pass in the end zone. Officials rule simultaneous catch, and a TD for A. Replays show B1 controlled the ball first and then both players came down with it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchback. To be a simultaneous catch, both players must gain control at the same time and maintain that control throughout the entire process of the catch. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**MOMENTUM**

**A.R. 15.180 Momentum, ball possessed in end zone**

First-and-10 on B35. A1's pass is intercepted by B1 near his own goal line and he is tackled in the end zone. Officials rule momentum and award B the ball at the B1. Replays show that after controlling the ball, B1's left foot came down on the goal line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchback. B's ball first-and-10 on B20. When reviewing momentum, the ball will be placed at the spot where the second foot (or other body part other than the hands) touched the ground. If that spot is in the end zone, it is a touchback.

Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.181 Momentum, ball possessed in field of play**

First-and-10 on B35. A1's pass is intercepted by B1 near his own goal line and officials rule touchback. Replays show that after controlling the ball B1's second foot came down at the 2-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B2. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play. If the player gained possession of the ball inside the 1-yard line the ball will be placed at the 1.

**FIELD GOALS AND EXTRA POINTS**

**A.R. 15.182 Ball outside upright**

Fourth-and-10 on B35. Team A attempts a long field goal and the ball hooks, crossing just in front of the left upright about five feet above the crossbar. The officials rule the attempt good and award Team A three points.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, FG attempt is no good. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.183 Ball hitting object**

Fourth-and-6 on B23. Team A attempts a field goal, and the ball hits the camera mounted on the goal post and bounces back into the end zone. The officials rule the attempt no good and award the ball to B.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, FG attempt is good. Once ball crosses above the crossbar and hits anything on the other side it is good. The coach must challenge this play outside two minutes of either half.

**A.R. 15.184 Ball hitting offensive player**

Fourth-and-6 on B17. On a field-goal attempt from the B25, the ball skips off the shoulder of Center A6 and then passes through the uprights. The officials rule the attempt good.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Field-goal attempt is no good. B's ball first-and-10 on B25. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**SPOT OF A FOUL**

**A.R. 15.185 Safety as result of foul in end zone**

Third-and-12 on A6. QBA1 completes a pass to receiver A3 at the A20. A7 is called for holding in the end zone and B is awarded a safety. Replays show the holding took place at the A2-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball third-and-15 on A3. The spot of a foul is reviewable and if the hold clearly took place in the field of play, the safety is overturned. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**NON-REVIEWABLE SITUATIONS INVOLVING SCORING PLAYS**

**A.R. 15.186 Out of bounds**

First-and-10 on B23. Runner A2 takes a handoff and runs down the sideline towards the end zone. He steps near the sideline at the 8-yard line with his left foot and then continues running and crosses the goal line. Officials rule A2 out of bounds at the B8-yard line. Replays show that A2's left foot did not touch the sideline.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. A's ball first-and-goal on B8. In this situation, once the officials rule the player out of bounds, replay can only look at the position of the ball in relation to the line to gain or goal line at that point. Since the ball was not breaking the plane of the goal line at that point and the player had to continue running (defined as taking two or more steps) after he was ruled out of bounds to get in the end zone, this play is not reviewable.

**A.R. 15.187 Field-goal attempt above upright**

Fourth-and-10 on B35. A's field-goal attempt is ruled good. Replays show the ball crossed above the top of the left upright.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. In order to be reviewable, the ball must cross below the top of the uprights.

**A.R. 15.188 Player takes ball into end zone**

Fourth-and-10 on B45. A1 punts and B1 receives the punt at the B2, starts to run to avoid a tackler and takes the ball into his own end zone where he is tackled. Officials rule safety.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. The officials' ruling on the field that the player took the ball into his own end zone (not momentum) is not reviewable. If the player had completed the catch in the end zone, the play would be reviewable.

**ILLEGAL BAT**

**A.R. 15.189 Illegal Bat**

First-and-10 on A3. A2 runs to the A5 and fumbles. B3 then bats the loose ball through A's end zone and over the end line. Officials rule safety.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. Safety, SK A20. An illegal bat is not reviewable, even if it results in a score or occurs in the end zone.



## TIMING

The game clock is reviewable, and time can be put back on the clock in certain situations. If the clock operator incorrectly starts the game clock, replay can fix the error, provided the correction occurs before the next legal snap or kick. **The game clock is reviewable to determine if the period expired before any snap.**

At the end of either half, if there is visual evidence of a down ending with two or more seconds remaining, but time expires on the game clock, it can be reset through a replay review. In the first half the score is not a factor, but the Replay Official will have some discretion based on the field position of the next snap. The offensive team's 40-yard line will be a general guideline. In the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter the score must be within eight points (one score), and the team that is behind must put the ball in play next (either team if score is tied). The next down must be a snap from scrimmage. The clock will not be reset if the next timed down is a free kick. The game clock can also be reset if there is visual evidence of a game official beginning to signal for a called team timeout with two or more seconds remaining, but time expires on the clock.

Consultation with on-field officials regarding the correct status of the game clock is also permitted as part of the Replay Official's customary administrative duties.

The game clock will be reset to the time at the end of the play when a ruling is changed in replay, and the status of the clock will be determined by the final ruling after replay. The clock will not be reset following a replay review when the on-field ruling is not changed. The play clock will be reset to 40 seconds (unless another rule requires otherwise) when a ruling is changed in replay. If a 10-second runoff is applied following a replay review, the play clock will be reset to 30 seconds.

There are two situations when time can be taken off the game clock following a replay review. (1) For any play that starts after the two-minute warning of either half and the correct ruling would have caused the clock to continuously run (or only temporarily stop and restart on the Referee's signal), there will be a 10-second runoff from the time the play should have ended. This applies regardless of whether the original on-field ruling resulted in a stopped clock or a running clock. The defense cannot decline the runoff, but either team can use a remaining timeout to prevent the runoff. (2) At the end of either half, if there is clear visual evidence of the game clock expiring before a down ended, but the game officials put time back on the game clock, it can be reset to 0:00 and the half/game will end.

Whether a runner's forward progress was stopped, or a runner was down by contact in the field of play is not reviewable as it relates to the game clock. If the officials rule progress or down, and wind the clock, replay cannot review whether the clock should have been stopped.

## GAME CLOCK REVIEW

### **A.R. 15.190 Game clock starts incorrectly**

Fourth-and-7 on A43. With the score tied, B2 fair catches a punt at the B24 with 0:50 remaining in the fourth quarter. Before the next snap, the game clock starts and runs down to 0:35 before stopping again.

**Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B24, reset game clock to 0:50.

### **A.R. 15.191 Reset game clock at end of half**

Third-and-2 on B29. With 0:07 remaining in the first half, Team A trails 13-0. QBA1 throws a pass to wide receiver A2, and the ball is batted away by B2 at the B8. After the play is over, the clock shows 0:00. The Replay Official reviews the play. When the ball hit the ground, there was 0:02 remaining on the game clock.

**Ruling:** A's ball fourth-and-2 on B29, reset game clock to 0:02. If there is visual evidence of the ball on the ground with two or more seconds on the game clock, then it is reset. The score is not a factor in the first half.

### **A.R. 15.192 No adjustment to game clock, less than 0:02**

Third-and-6 on A49. With 0:07 remaining in the first half, the clock is running, A is behind 13-10, and is out of timeouts. Team A rushes to the line, gets set and snaps the ball. A1's pass intended for A2 is knocked down at the B12 by B1. After the down, the clock shows 0:00. The Replay Official looks at the play and sees there was one second remaining on the clock when the ball hit the ground after it was touched by B1.

**Ruling:** Half over. There must be at least two seconds remaining to put time back on the game clock through a formal replay review. However, the Replay Official can provide clock information to on-field officials if they request administrative assistance regarding the game clock.

### **A.R. 15.193 End of half, Replay Official discretion**

Second-and-4 on A22. With 0:09 remaining in the first half, Team A is behind 10-0. QBA1 scrambles and throws a pass intended for A2 which falls incomplete at the B44. At the end of the down, the clock shows 0:00. The Replay Official notices immediately that when the ball hit the ground the game clock was at 0:02.

**Ruling:** Half over. At the end of the first half, the Replay Official will have discretion whether to review the game clock based on the field position for the next snap. The offensive team's 40-yard line will be a general guideline.

### **A.R. 15.194 Reset game clock at end of game**

Third-and-5 on B36. With 0:06 remaining in the fourth quarter, Team A trails 20-13. QBA1's pass is caught by A3 at the B29 who then runs to the B27 and steps out of bounds. At the end of the down, the game clock shows 0:00, but when A3's right foot hit the ground out of bounds there was 0:02 remaining.

**Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on B27, reset game clock to 0:02. If there are two or more seconds on the game clock when the runner's foot (or other body part) is out of bounds, then it is reset. The score must be within eight points in the fourth quarter.

**A.R. 15.195 End of half/game, time off game clock**

Second-and-6 on B32. With 0:07 remaining in the fourth quarter, Team A trails 21-17 and has no timeouts remaining. QBA1's pass is broken up in the end zone by B2, and the ball hits the ground with 0:00 remaining on the clock. The game officials confer and decide to put 0:01 back the clock.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Game over. If there is clear visual evidence that the clock had expired before the down ended, then replay can reset the clock to 0:00.

**A.R. 15.196 End of period, clock expires before snap**

Second-and-6 on B14. With 0:07 remaining in any period and the game clock running, QBA1 hurries to the line, snaps the ball, and throws a touchdown pass to A4. The replay official reviews the play and has clear and obvious video evidence that the game clock had clearly expired prior to the snap.

**Ruling:** Period over and the play is nullified. The game clock is reviewable to determine if the period expired before any snap.

**A.R. 15.197 Reset game clock, QB spike**

First-and-10 on 50. With 18 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter, Team A has no timeouts remaining and trails 24-21. QBA1 completes a pass to A2 at the B20 where he is tackled inbounds. Team A lines up, and QBA1 spikes the ball with 0:02 remaining on the clock, but the game clock runs to 0:00 and officials rule the game over.

**Ruling:** A's ball second-and-10 on B20, reset game clock to 0:02. If there is video evidence of the ball on the ground with two or more seconds on the game clock, then it is reset.

**A.R. 15.198 Reset game clock, timeout**

First-and-10 on 50. With 0:10 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter, Team A has one timeout remaining and trails 24-21. QBA1 completes a pass to A2 at the B20 where he is tackled inbounds. Team A's head coach runs down the sideline at the end of the play and signals to the Line Judge for a timeout, but the game clock runs to 0:00 and the officials rule the game over. Replays show the Line Judge start to physically signal with 0:02 remaining on the game clock.

**Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on B20, reset game clock to 0:02. If there is video evidence of a game official beginning the physical signal for a called team timeout (brings both arms over his/her head) with two or more seconds on the game clock, then it is reset.

**A.R. 15.199 Reset game clock, unsuccessful field goal**

Fourth-and-8 on B18. With 0:05 remaining in the fourth quarter in a tied game, A1's field-goal attempt from the B26 is no good and hits the netting behind the goal post with 0:02 remaining on the game clock, but the clock operator runs the clock to 0:00.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B26. Reset the clock to 0:02. On an unsuccessful field goal where the clock runs to 0:00, there must be visual evidence of the ball hitting the net, the ground, or an object with 0:02 or more to reset the clock.

**A.R. 15.200 No adjustment to game clock, score**

Second-and-5 on B26. With 0:06 remaining in the fourth quarter, Team A trails 20-10. QBA1's intended pass to A2 falls incomplete at the B6. At the end of the down, the game clock shows 0:00, but when the ball hit the ground there was 0:02 remaining.

**Ruling:** Game over. No review, due to score. At the end of the fourth quarter, the score must be within eight points to reset the game clock.

**A.R. 15.201 No review, kickoff**

Fourth-and-8 on B18. With 0:05 remaining in the fourth quarter, Team A trails 21-19 and has no timeouts remaining. A1's field goal attempt from the B26 is good and hits the netting behind the goal post with 0:02 remaining on the game clock, but the clock operator runs the clock to 0:00.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. Game over, Team A wins 22-21. In order to reset the game clock, the next down must be a snap from scrimmage. A maximum of five seconds can run off the game clock on a successful field-goal attempt.

**GAME CLOCK RESET****A.R. 15.202 Reversal creates stopped clock**

First-and-10 on A20. A pass to the A35-yard line is ruled complete in the field of play with 10:00 on the game clock. With 9:30 remaining, B challenges that the pass was incomplete. Replays show that the ball hit the ground.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete pass. Second-and-10 on A20. Reset the clock to the time when the pass was incomplete and start on the snap.

**A.R. 15.203 Clock wound before challenge**

First-and-10 on A20. In the third quarter, QBA1's pass to A80 is ruled complete at the sideline at the A35. When A80 went out of bounds, the clock was stopped at 9:30. The clock is then wound, and Team B challenges the ruling with 9:15 remaining. Replays show the pass was incomplete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete pass. Second-and-10 on A20. Reset the clock to the time when the pass was incomplete and start on the snap.

**A.R. 15.204 Out of bounds**

First-and-10 on A20. A1 runs and is ruled down inbounds at the 50 with 9:45 on the clock. Team B challenges and replays show A1 stepping out of bounds at the A25 with 10:00 remaining on the game clock.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Second-and-5 on A25. Reset the clock to 10:00 and wind the clock. If this play occurred during the last two minutes of the first half, or inside of 5 minutes of the second half, the clock would start on the snap.

**A.R. 15.205 Down by contact after change of possession**

First-and-10 on A20. B1 recovers a fumble at the B45 and is tackled in bounds at the A20-yard line with 9:40 on the clock. The Replay Official initiates a review of the play and replay determines that B1 was down by contact at the B45 with 9:45 remaining on the game clock.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball, first-and-10 on B45. Reset the clock to 9:45, start on snap. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.206 Score**

First-and-goal on B5. A1 runs to the goal line and is ruled down short with 10:00 showing on the game clock. With 9:40 on the clock, Team A challenges that the runner scored. Replays show the ball over the goal line before A1 was down.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown Team A. Reset the clock to the time when A1 scored the touchdown.

**A.R. 15.207 Two-minute warning**

Second-and-6 on A47. With 2:03 remaining in the second quarter, A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B30 where he is tackled with 1:51 left on the game clock. Replays showed that A2 was down by contact at the B45 with 1:57 left on the clock.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B45. Reset the clock to 1:57 and start the clock on the snap because of the two-minute warning.

**A.R. 15.208 Challenge after two-minute warning**

First-and-10 on 50. At the snap, there is 2:07 remaining in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. A1 runs and is ruled down at the B20 with 1:56 on the game clock. Officials stop the clock for the two-minute warning. During the two-minute warning, Team B challenges that A1 stepped out of bounds at the B45. Replays show that A1 did step out at the B45 with 2:02 on the game clock.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-5 on B45. Reset the clock to 2:02 and the clock will start on the ready for play. Teams can challenge up until the first legal snap or kickoff following the two-minute warning. The two-minute warning will occur when the clock reaches 2:00. Unless TV needs a break, the "second" two-minute warning will be 30 seconds. If this play occurred in the fourth quarter, the clock would start on the snap.

**A.R. 15.209 Clock stopped for foul**

Second-and-6 on A47. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B25 with 8:40 showing on the game clock. B77 is flagged on the play for a facemask. Replays show that A2 was down by contact at the B45 with 8:47 remaining.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B30. Enforce facemask foul from the B45 and adjust game clock to 8:47, wind on the ready.

**A.R. 15.210 Timeout called**

Second-and-10 on A25. With 1:24 remaining in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, A trails 17-14 and has two timeouts remaining. Receiver A8 catches a pass at the A35 with 1:18 left on the clock. He is hit there but stumbles forward and runs to the 50 where he is tackled with 1:10 remaining and immediately calls a timeout. Replays show that A8 was down by contact at the A35.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on A35, reset the clock to the time when A2 was down by contact at the A35. A is still charged the timeout. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.211 Kickoff not touched in field of play**

With five seconds left in the fourth quarter, Team A has just kicked a field goal to take a 17-14 lead. On the ensuing kickoff, the ball goes between the legs of kick returner B3 without touching him and out of bounds at the B5-yard line. Officials rule the ball touched B3 and the game clock ran out during the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, kickoff out of bounds, B's ball first-and-10 on B40 and reset the clock to 5 seconds. Since the ball was not legally touched in the field of play, the clock should not have started.

**A.R. 15.212 Runner down in field of play**

First-and-10 on A20. With 3 minutes remaining in the second quarter, A2 takes a handoff and fumbles at the A27. B4 recovers the ball and returns it for a TD. Replays show that A2 was down by contact at the A27.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-3 on A27. Reset the game clock to the time when A2 was down by contact, and wind on the ready. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.213 Runner down before two-minute warning**

First-and-10 on A20. With 2:06 remaining in the second quarter, A1 dives for a catch near the A24. A1 gets up as B3 attempts a tackle and runs to the A40, where he is downed with 1:52 remaining on the game clock. Officials stop the clock for the two-minute warning. Replays show that A1 completed the catch, but was down by contact at the A24 with 2:02 remaining on the game clock. Team B challenges the ruling that A1 was not down by contact.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-6 on A24. Because the two-minute warning did not occur before the snap, Team B must challenge the ruling. Reset the game clock to 2:02, and wind on the ready. The two-minute warning will occur when the clock reaches 2:00. If the two-minute warning occurred before the challenge, the "second" two-minute warning will be 30 seconds unless TV needs a break.

**A.R. 15.214 Play started before two-minute warning**

Second-and-10 on B45. With 2:09 remaining in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, Team A trails 17-14 and has no timeouts remaining. QBA1 completes a pass to receiver A8 at the B30 who is hit but stumbles forward and runs out of bounds at the B15 with 1:54 left on the clock. Replays show that A8 was down by contact at the B30 with 2:02 remaining on the clock.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B30. Reset the clock to 2:02, and wind on the ready. There is no 10-second runoff because the play started before the two-minute warning. The two-minute warning will occur when the clock reaches 2:00. If the two-minute warning occurred before the challenge, the "second" two-minute warning will be 30 seconds unless TV needs a break.

**A.R. 15.215 Pass ruled complete in end zone**

Second-and-3 on B14. QBA1's pass to A3 is ruled complete at the end line for a TD with 0:45 remaining on the clock in the fourth quarter. The Replay Official initiates a review, and it is determined that A3's second foot came down out of bounds with 0:46

remaining on the clock.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball third-and-3 on B14, reset the game clock to 0:46, and start on the snap.

## **10-SECOND RUNOFF**

### **A.R. 15.216 Reversal creates running clock, run 10 seconds**

First-and-10 on 50. With 1:22 remaining in the second quarter, Team A is out of timeouts. QBA1's pass to receiver A8 is ruled incomplete in the middle of the field at the B35. Replays show that A8 did catch the ball with 1:15 left on the clock.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B35, adjust game clock to 1:05 and wind. The clock is reset to the time when the pass was complete and then 10 seconds are run off from that point. Team B could use a remaining timeout in lieu of the runoff.

### **A.R. 15.217 Reversal creates running clock, half over**

Second-and-6 on B20. With 14 seconds remaining in the second quarter, Team A is out of timeouts. QBA1 completes a pass to receiver A8 who is tackled at the goal line. The officials rule TD and the clock is stopped with 7 seconds remaining. The Replay Official stops the game after a replay comes up that clearly shows A8 was down by contact with the ball at the B1 and 9 seconds on the clock.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Run 10 seconds off the clock, half over. If Team A had a timeout remaining it could use it in lieu of the runoff, and it would have the ball at the B1 with 9 seconds remaining.

### **A.R. 15.218 Reversal creates running clock**

Third-and-5 on B10. Team B leads 24-20 with 0:30 remaining in the game. Both teams have one timeout remaining. A1 throws a pass to A2 at the B6, and he is tackled near the B5. Officials spot the ball at the B5 and award a first down. Just before center A3 snaps the ball on the next play, the Replay Official stops the game to review the spot (0:16). Replays show that the ball was at the B5½ when A2 was down by contact, and the clock was at 0:26.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-½ on B5½. The clock is reset to the time when A2 was down by contact (0:26) and both teams have the option of taking a team timeout to avoid the 10-second runoff. If a timeout is taken, the clock remains at 0:26 and starts on the snap. If neither team takes a timeout, then the clock is set to 0:16 and starts on the ready for play. The 10-second runoff rule applies regardless of whether the original ruling resulted in a stopped or a running clock.

### **A.R. 15.219 Fumble out of bounds – immediate running clock**

Third-and-goal on B10. With 0:04 remaining in the game, Team B leads 16-8, and both teams have one timeout remaining. Back A2 catches a screen pass from QBA1 at the B7 and is running near the sideline when B1, who is out of bounds, strips the ball out of A2's hands at the B5 with 0:02 on the clock. The ball rolls into the end zone, where B2 recovers the ball for a touchback with 0:00 on the game clock. The Replay Official initiates a review of the play.

**Ruling:** A's ball, fourth-and-goal on B5. This is a fumble out of bounds at the B5. The game clock will be reset to the time when it became dead out of bounds (0:02). For plays after the two-minute warning, if there is a reversal to a running clock, or to a situation where the clock is re-started, there is a 10-second runoff. Team A can use its last timeout to prevent the runoff.

### **A.R. 15.220 Line to gain ruling not changed, no clock reset**

Third-and-10 on A30. With 1:55 remaining in a tied game, A1 runs to the A39, where he is tackled. Officials spot the ball at the A38. Replays show that A1 was down by contact near the A40, and the Replay Official reviews the play. Following review, the Referee re-spots the ball and measures, and the ball is just short of the A40.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-inches on A39. Because the ruling of whether A2 made the line to gain did not change, the clock is not reset and there is no 10-second runoff. The game clock will start on the ready for play, and the play clock will start from the time it was when the game was stopped (minimum of 10 seconds).

## **NO ADJUSTMENT TO GAME CLOCK**

### **A.R. 15.221 Kick touched before going out of bounds**

With five seconds left in the fourth quarter, Team A kicks off and the ball glances off the leg of B3 and goes out of bounds at the B5-yard line. Officials rule that the ball did not touch B3 and rule a kickoff out of bounds.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B5, but in this situation, replay cannot take time off the clock, five seconds remain.

## **NON-REVIEWABLE PLAYS INVOLVING THE CLOCK**

### **A.R. 15.222 Down by contact at sideline**

Second-and-10 on B45. With 10 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter, Team A trails 17-14 and is out of timeouts. Receiver A80 catches a pass at the B35 with five seconds on the clock and attempts to get out of bounds. A80: (a) was contacted by B1 after he catches the pass and is falling to the ground; (b) dives for the sideline; or (c) stumbles and rolls out of bounds. A80 is ruled out with one second left on the clock. Replays show that the first body part to hit the ground was his left knee inbounds at the B35.

**Rulings:**

(a) and (b) Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B35. The ball is dead inbounds. Run 10 seconds off the clock, game over. If Team A had a timeout remaining it could use it in lieu of the runoff, and it would have the ball at the B35 with one second remaining. A diving player is deemed to have given himself up, and the ball is dead at the spot where the first body part other than hands or feet touches the ground inbounds.

(c) Not reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B35 with one second remaining. A player who has stumbled and rolled out of bounds on his own is not deemed to have been down if he has not been contacted by an opponent.

### **A.R. 15.223 Play clock**

Second-and-10 on B15. With the play clock winding down QBA1 receives the snap and throws a TD pass to A80. Replays show that the play clock expired before the snap.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. Touchdown A, KO A35.

## TIMEOUTS

If a team challenges and loses the challenge, it is charged a timeout. If a team takes a timeout and then challenges and loses, it is charged both timeouts.

If a team takes a timeout to stop a running clock after the two-minute warning and a subsequent replay review results in a reversal to a stopped clock, the timeout is restored.

If a team challenges a ruling that can only be challenged by the Replay Official, it will be charged with a timeout, but not a challenge. The play may still be reviewable by the Replay Official. If a team attempts to challenge any play without a timeout, a 15-yard penalty for Unsportsmanlike Conduct will be enforced as a foul between downs.

### TIMEOUT CHARGED

#### **A.R. 15.224 On-field ruling upheld**

First-and-10 on A35. QBA1's pass is ruled complete at the B40. Team B coach challenges the ruling, but replays show that the pass was complete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B40. Team B loses the challenge and is charged a timeout.

#### **A.R. 15.225 On-field ruling upheld—Clock changed in administration**

Second-and-5 on A35. With 8:00 remaining in the third quarter, QBA1's pass is ruled incomplete at the A40. The clock stops at 7:45. Team A coach challenges the ruling. Replays show that the pass was incomplete, and that the clock should have stopped at 7:54.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball third-and-5 on A35, reset clock to 7:54. Team A loses the challenge and is charged a timeout. Whether a challenge is successful is not affected by a clock reset as part of administration.

#### **A.R. 15.226 First down in the middle of field, status of down not changed**

Third-and-10 on A35. A2 takes a handoff and is ruled down at the A43. Team A challenges the spot claiming that it was a first down. The replays show that the correct spot was the A44.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-1 on A44. Re-spot the ball at the A44 and start on the snap. Team A loses the challenge and is charged with a timeout because the down did not change.

#### **A.R. 15.227 First down spot at sideline**

Third-and-10 on A20. A2 takes a handoff and is ruled out of bounds at the A28-yard line. Team A challenges that A2 gained the first down. Replays show that the ball was at the A29-yard line when A2 stepped on the sideline.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-1 on A29. Re-spot the ball at the A29, and start on the snap. Team A loses the challenge and is charged with a timeout because the down did not change.

#### **A.R. 15.228 Down by contact, no clear recovery**

Second-and-10 on A20. Runner A2 gets hit and loses the ball at the A23. The officials rule A2 down by contact. The ball goes into a pile and B3 eventually comes out with it, but there was no on-field ruling of who recovered the ball. Replays show that A2 lost the ball before he was down. Team B challenges the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, but when down by contact is ruled there must be a clear recovery in order to win the challenge. A's ball third-and-7 on A23. Team B loses the challenge and is charged a timeout. If on-field officials had ruled that B3 recovered the ball, that would constitute a clear recovery in replay and Team B would be awarded the ball.

#### **A.R. 15.229 Challenge not permitted; timeout charged**

First-and-10 on B46. QBA1's pass is ruled intercepted in the field of play by B3 at the B20. Replays show the pass hit the ground before B3 possessed it. Team A coach throws his challenge flag.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-10 on B46, charge Team A with a timeout. Reset the game clock to the time when the pass hit the ground. If the ruling on the field is an interception, the play cannot be challenged by either team. A timeout is automatically charged, but the play is still reviewable by the Replay Official. If A was out of timeouts, a 15-yard penalty would be enforced from the B46.

#### **A.R. 15.230 Challenge not permitted; team out of timeouts**

First-and-10 on B46. QBA1's pass is ruled intercepted in the field of play by B3 at the B20. Replays show the pass hit the ground before B3 possessed it. Team A coach throws his challenge flag. Team A has no timeouts.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-25 on A39, reverse to incomplete and enforce a 15-yard penalty from the previous spot. Reset the game clock to the time when the pass hit the ground. If the ruling on the field is an interception, the play cannot be challenged by either team.

#### **A.R. 15.231 Encroachment; coach throws flag without a timeout**

First-and-10 on A20. With 2:45 to go in the fourth quarter, A2 catches a pass at the A45. Before the next snap, defensive end B7 encroaches and then the Team B coach throws his challenge flag. Team B is out of timeouts.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, but Team B cannot challenge both because it committed a foul that prevented the snap, and because it is out of timeouts. A's ball first-and-10 on B35. In this situation, the UNS is considered a foul between downs, so both fouls are enforced.

**A.R. 15.232 Coach attempts to withdraw challenge**

First-and-10 on A20. QBA1's pass is ruled incomplete at the sideline at the 50. Team A's coach challenges that the pass was complete. While the Referee was coming to the sideline, a replay on the video board shows the pass was incomplete. The coach then tells the Referee that he doesn't want to challenge the ruling.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-10 on A20, charge Team A with a timeout. A coach cannot challenge a reviewable play and then change his mind. If the Referee feels that is the case, the head coach has two choices. He can either go through with the challenge and all normal rules will apply. (If the play stands, the team loses a challenge and a timeout). Or, the coach can take a team timeout (no challenge charged). If the Referee feels the coach is genuinely confused as to what is reviewable, then the Referee can allow the coach to pick up the red flag with no challenge or timeout charged.

**A.R. 15.233 Two timeouts charged on one play**

Third-and-10 on A45. With 3:30 left in the fourth quarter, QBA1's passes to A80 who is ruled down at the B44. Officials rule that the pass was complete at the B44. Team B coach takes its second charged timeout of the half to stop the game clock. During the timeout, more replays of the play become available and Team B's coach initiates a challenge that pass was incomplete. Replay (a) does not have enough video evidence to overturn the ruling on the field of a completed pass; or (b) does have enough video evidence to overturn the on field ruling to incomplete.

**Rulings:**

(a) A's ball, first-and-10 at B44. B is charged with a second timeout as a result of the lost challenge. B has no timeouts remaining. Game clock will start on the snap;

(b) A's ball second-and 10 at A45. B is charged with one team timeout. A second timeout is not charged because the challenge was successful. The game clock will start on the snap.

**TIMEOUT NOT CHARGED****A.R. 15.234 Aspect of the play changed**

Fourth-and-10 on A35. A1 punts to B1 at the B25-yard line. B1 returns the punt to the B32, where he is hit and fumbles. A2 recovers the ball at the B34 but is ruled out of bounds and officials award the ball to Team B. Team A challenges that A2 was not touching the sideline during the recovery. Replays show that B1's knee touched down before the fumble.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on B32. Reset the clock to the time when B1 was down by contact. This is a successful challenge and A will not be charged with a timeout because a reviewable aspect of the play was changed. The only exception to this is when a team challenges the line to gain and the ball is re-spotted, but the down remains the same.

**TIMEOUT INSIDE TWO MINUTES****A.R. 15.235 Timeout restored; reversal creates stopped clock**

First-and-10 on A40. With 1:30 remaining in the fourth quarter and Team A trailing 17-14, QBA1 completes a pass to A2 in the middle of the field at the B42 and then calls a timeout. Replays show the pass hitting the ground before A2 possessed it and the Replay Official initiates a review of the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete pass, A's ball second-and-10 on A40, reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. Team A's timeout is restored. For the timeout to be restored, the timeout must have been taken to stop a running clock after the two-minute warning and there is a reversal to a stopped clock.

**A.R. 15.236 Timeout restored; change of possession**

Second-and-5 on A25. With 53 seconds remaining in the second quarter, QBA1 throws a low pass that appears to be intercepted by B4 at the A33, but the officials rule that the ball hit the ground. During the play Tackle A6 is injured and needs assistance getting off the field. Team A is charged an injury timeout. Replays show that the ball never hit the ground and the Replay Official initiates a review of the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on A33. Team A's timeout is restored because an injury timeout is not charged on a play involving a change of possession. Injury timeouts are determined after all aspects of the play are considered – including fouls or replay reviews.

**A.R. 15.237 Timeout not restored; line to gain**

Third-and-10 on A40. With 1:52 remaining in the fourth quarter, QBA1 completes a pass to A2 who runs to the 50, where he is tackled. Officials mark the ball just short of the 50 making it fourth down. Team A takes a timeout to decide whether to go for it and a replay comes up showing that the ball was just beyond the 50 when A2 was down by contact. The Replay Official initiates a review of the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, A's ball first-and-10 on 50, reset clock to the time when A2 was down by contact. Team A's timeout is not restored because the changed ruling to a first down did not result in a stopped clock. There is no 10-second runoff because a timeout was called after the play.



## FOULS THAT PREVENT SNAP

If a team commits a foul that prevents the snap, it is no longer permitted to challenge the previous play. A foul is considered to prevent the snap if it is committed after the ball is made ready for play (ball in position to be snapped and officials in position to officiate the play) and causes the play clock to stop before a snap. If the team attempts to challenge, it will be charged a timeout or UNS penalty (if out of timeouts). Fouls that prevent the snap will not prevent the Replay Official from initiating a review that would benefit the offending team. This rule applies to both offensive and defensive fouls. There is nothing a team can do to prevent a review when the Replay Official is responsible for initiating it.

### NO REVIEW PERMITTED

#### **A.R. 15.238 Team fouls before next snap and challenges**

First-and-10 on A20. With 8 minutes to go in the third quarter, A2 catches a pass at the A45. Before the next snap, defensive end B7 encroaches. After the encroachment foul, Team B attempts to challenge that the pass was incomplete.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, but since Team B committed a foul that prevented the snap, it cannot challenge the ruling. A's ball first-and-5 on 50. Team B is charged a timeout, but not a challenge.

### REVIEW PERMITTED

#### **A.R. 15.239 False start, inside two minutes**

First-and-10 on A20. With 1:23 left in the second quarter, QBA1's pass to A3 is ruled incomplete at the A45. Before the next snap tackle A67 false starts. Replays show that A3 caught the pass.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, A's ball first-and-10 on A45, the FST is ignored. Reset the clock to the time when A3 caught the pass and either team can elect to use a charged team timeout to avoid a 10-second runoff from that time. When the play falls under the Replay Official's jurisdiction, a foul that prevents the snap will not prevent a review. The false start is only ignored if the call is overturned.

#### **A.R. 15.240 Defensive foul, offense challenges**

First-and-10 on B20. In the third quarter, A3 catches a pass at the B3 and gets tackled right at the goal line. The officials rule A3 down short of the goal line. Before the next snap, B77 encroaches. Team A then challenges that A3 scored. Replays show that the ball was breaking the plane of the goal line before A3 was down and that QBA1 was at the B18 when he threw the pass.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. IFP, A's ball, second-and-13 on B23, the ENC is ignored. Reset the clock to the time when the ball broke the plane of the goal line and start on the snap. If the team that did not commit the foul challenges the previous play, then replay can review all aspects and either team may benefit from the review. The challenge is successful because a reviewable aspect was changed.



## PENALTIES

Replay can review whether a player touched the ball, or touched a boundary line, and fouls can be created or negated based on that information. These situations are explained in other sections of the casebook. Whether 12 or more players were on the field is also reviewable. Purely subjective fouls such as holding are not reviewable.

Penalty administration including the number of the down, yardage, and the spot of a foul is reviewable, and the normal rules pertaining to coach challenges and Replay Official reviews apply. In addition, Replay Officials and designated members of the Officiating department can consult with the Referee on administrative matters and certain objective aspects of a play (see 15-3-9).

### NUMBER OF PLAYERS ON FIELD

#### A.R. 15.241 Too many men on the field

Third-and-10 on B22. B7 realizes he is the twelfth player on defense and attempts to get to the sideline before the snap. At the snap, B7 was still one yard from the sideline. Pass is incomplete and there are no flags on the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball third-and-5 on B17. All 12 men must be viewable on the screen to overturn. Replay can piece different shots together to determine how many players were on the field at the snap. To be off the field, the player must have a body part touching out of bounds before the snap.

#### A.R. 15.242 Too many men in the formation

Third-and-10 on B22. B1 intercepts a pass and returns it for a touchdown. Before the snap, B had 12 players in the formation, but no foul was called, and the snap was allowed.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball third-and-5 on B17. Replay can review the number of players on the field at the snap even though officials did not call a foul for too many men in formation. If this foul is created in replay it is enforced as a live ball foul. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

#### A.R. 15.243 Too many men in the formation, play shut down before snap

Second-and-10 on B40. The Side Judge shuts the play down just before the snap, ruling that Team B had 12 players in the formation, but there were only 11 players in the formation.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-10 on B40. The number of players on the field when officials rule a dead ball foul for too many players in formation is reviewable.

#### A.R. 15.244 Players on the field at the snap—Illegal substitution

Third-and-5 on A35. A1 takes a handoff and runs to the A38, where he is tackled by B1. Officials throw a flag for illegal substitution, ruling that B11, who came off the bench at the A40 as the eleventh player, entered the field after the snap. Replays show that B11 had touched the ground with both feet in the field of play before the snap. Team B challenges the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable play. A's ball, fourth-and-2 on A38. Whether a player was on the field at the snap is reviewable and can create or remove a foul for illegal substitution.

## ADMINISTRATION

#### A.R. 15.245 Spot of foul

Third-and-10 on B20. QBA1 is under pressure and throws an incomplete pass while standing at the B38. The Referee calls intentional grounding and after enforcing the penalty, the ball is placed at the B32.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball fourth-and-28 on B38.

#### A.R. 15.246 Spot of foul, pass interference at line of scrimmage

Second-and-10 on B18. QBA1 throws a short pass to A2 at the B18, which falls incomplete. While the ball is in the air, defender B1 grabs and turns A2 at the B18. Thinking the foul was at the B16, officials throw a flag for DPI and enforce it at that spot, first-and-10 on B16. Team B's head coach challenges the spot of the foul.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball third-and-10 on B18; no DPI; and reset the clock to the time it was when the ball hit the ground. The spot of a foul is reviewable, and since the action that was called DPI was not more than a yard beyond the line of scrimmage, it cannot be a foul for DPI. If the Referee had announced before the review that there was both DH and DPI on the play, the offense would have the option to accept the DH following review.

#### A.R. 15.247 Number of down after penalty enforcement

Third-and-6 on A35. B1 is offside. The penalty is accepted. Officials mark off the penalty, but mistakenly make it fourth down.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball third-and-1 on A40. Replay can be used to determine the proper down.

#### A.R. 15.248 Penalty yardage

First-and-10 on B35. A1 completes a forward pass to the B12-yard line, but A2 is called for holding. The officials mistakenly mark off a five-yard penalty.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-20 on B45. Replay can be used to determine the yardage penalty.

#### A.R. 15.249 Timing of Foul

Third-and-8 on A32. A1 throws a pass that is intercepted by B1 at the A40 and returned to the A25, where he is tackled. Officials call a facemask foul against B1 and mistakenly rule that the foul occurred after the interception and award the ball to Team B. Replays clearly show that the foul occurred before the interception.

**Ruling:** Reviewable play. A's ball, first-and-10 on A47. Because the foul clearly occurred before the interception, it is enforced from the previous spot and Team A retains possession. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.250 Timing of Foul**

Second-and-10 on B20. A1 takes a handoff and runs for a touchdown. Officials call a blindside block by A2 at the B5-yard line, but mistakenly rule that the foul occurred after A1 scored. Replays clearly show that the foul occurred when A1 was at the B3-yard line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable play. A's ball, second-and-10 on B20, and start the clock on the snap. Because the foul clearly occurred before the score, it is enforced as a live ball foul and there is no score. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**NON-REVIEWABLE PLAYS INVOLVING PENALTIES****A.R. 15.251 Offensive holding**

First-and-10 on A30. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B47 where he is tackled. A7 is called for holding B9 at the A32. Replays show that B9 tripped and was not held.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. A's ball first-and-18 on A22.

**A.R. 15.252 12 men in offensive huddle**

Third-and-1 on B43. Team A has 12 men in the huddle and then A8 runs off the field before the snap. A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B38.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B38. Replay cannot review how many players were in the offensive huddle if officials do not rule a dead ball foul for too many players.

**A.R. 15.253 Intentional grounding, pass ruled short of line of scrimmage**

Third-and-10 on A8. QBA1 rolls out of the pocket to avoid a sack and throws the ball from the end zone to the A10 with no eligible receivers in the area. The Line Judge rules that the ball did not make it back to the line of scrimmage and the Referee throws his flag for intentional grounding.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. Safety, SK A20.

**A.R. 15.254 Ineligible players downfield**

First-and-10 on B20. Back A1 catches a screen pass and runs for a touchdown. Replays show Guard A2 moving downfield at the B15-yard line before the pass.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. Touchdown stands.

**A.R. 15.255 Palpably unfair act**

Third-and-5 on B17. B1 intercepts a pass and is returning it down the sideline. B12 comes off the bench and makes a block that allows B1 to run for a score.

**Ruling:** Not reviewable. A palpably unfair act is not a reviewable infraction. Whether a player was on the field at the snap is reviewable and can create or remove a foul for illegal substitution.

## MISCELLANEOUS SITUATIONS

### INITIATING REPLAY REVIEW

#### A.R. 15.256 Play ruled score

First-and-10 on B12. With 4:02 remaining in the second quarter, QBA1's pass to A80 is ruled complete in the end zone for a TD. Replays show the ball hit the ground before A80 possessed it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete pass, A's ball second-and-10 on B12. Reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play since the ruling on the field resulted in a score.

#### A.R. 15.257 Play ruled turnover

First-and-10 on A30. With 10:00 remaining in the second quarter, QBA1's pass is ruled intercepted by B3 at the A45. Replays show the ball hit the ground before B3 possessed it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete pass, A's ball second-and-10 on A30. Reset the game clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play since the ruling on the field resulted in an interception.

#### A.R. 15.258 Multiple aspects to review

First-and-10 on A30. With 10:00 remaining in the second quarter, back A2 fumbles at the A45 and it is returned by B4 to the A5. Replays show that after recovering the fumble, B4 was down by contact at the A45.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on A45, reset the clock to the time when B4 was down by contact. The ruling on the field was a fumble recovered by the defense. Although that is not in question, only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play. Once the review is initiated, replay will look at all reviewable aspects of the play.

#### A.R. 15.259 Play not ruled score

Third-and-goal on B4. In the third quarter, back A2 takes a handoff and runs to the goal line where he is hit and driven backward. The officials spot the ball short of the goal line and make it fourth down. Replays show the ball broke the plane of the goal line.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Touchdown, KO A35, reset the clock to the time of the touchdown. Since the ruling on the field did not result in points for either team, the Team A coach must challenge the ruling outside two minutes of either half.

#### A.R. 15.260 Foul negates score

Fourth-and-goal on B8. With 3:43 remaining in the fourth quarter, QBA1's pass to A8 is ruled complete in the end zone, but A7 is penalized for offensive holding. Replays show that the ball hit the ground before A8 possessed it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Incomplete pass, B's ball first-and-10 on B8, decline holding foul. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play since the ruling on the field was a touchdown nullified by a penalty.

#### A.R. 15.261 Play not ruled turnover

Fourth-and-10 on A30. With 10:00 remaining in the second quarter, Team A's punt grazes the left leg of B19 and is then recovered by A44 at the B30. The officials rule that B19 did not touch the ball and award possession to B.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B30. The ruling on the field was that the scrimmage kick was not touched by B, so the Team A coach must challenge outside two minutes.

#### A.R. 15.262 Line to gain on fourth down

Fourth-and-2 on B41. With 3:43 remaining in the fourth quarter, back A2 takes a handoff and runs to the B39 where he is hit and driven backward. The officials spot the ball at the B39½ and award possession to Team B.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball first-and-10 on B39, and wind on the ready. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play because the on-field ruling was a turnover on downs.

#### A.R. 15.263 Onside kick

With 2:40 remaining in the fourth quarter, Team A attempts an onside kick from the A35. A19 is the first to touch the ball at the A44 and then recovers it at the A46. The officials award possession to Team A.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. B's ball first-and-10 on A44. ITK. Team B's coach must challenge this play outside two minutes of either half. The Replay Official is not responsible for initiating a review during a free kick before the two-minute warning but is responsible for challenging the play if there is a turnover or score during a subsequent run.

### TIMING OF CHALLENGE

#### A.R. 15.264 Double Challenge

Second-and-10 on B35. With 12:00 remaining in the fourth quarter, QBA1 rolls out and throws a pass to A2 at the back of the end zone that is ruled incomplete. Team A challenges that the pass was complete, but replays show that A2 only got one foot down inbounds and the call on the field is upheld. While the Referee is making his announcement, a new replay comes up that shows the QB stepping on the sideline at the B40 before releasing the pass. Team B challenges the play.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Both teams can challenge the same play. A's ball third-and-15 on the B40, reset the clock to the time when the QB stepped out of bounds, and start on the snap. A team cannot challenge the same play twice. It is important that all reviewable aspects of a play are confirmed by replay regardless of what is being challenged. Team A is charged with a challenge and a timeout.

#### A.R. 15.265 Next legal snap

First-and-10 on A20. In the third quarter, A2 catches a pass at the A45. Before the next snap, Tackle A5 false starts. Replays show that the ball hit the ground before A2 caught it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. Play can be reviewed up until the next legal snap. Incomplete pass, A's ball second-and 10 on A20, reset the clock to the time the ball hit the ground, and the penalty for false start is ignored. Only Team B can challenge the ruling in this

situation since it did not commit the foul that prevented the next snap.

**A.R. 15.266 Try**

First-and-10 on B15. At the start of the play there is 2:02 remaining in the second quarter. A2 catches a pass in the end zone that is ruled a TD with 1:53 left on the clock. Team A then attempts a two-point conversion and QBA1 is ruled down short of the goal line. Replays show that the ball broke the plane before he was down.

**Ruling:** Reviewable, two-point conversion is good, KO A35. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of a Try, whether successful or unsuccessful.

**A.R. 15.267 Double foul that prevents the snap**

First-and-10 on B30. A pass to A2 is ruled incomplete near the goal line. Before the next legal snap, A5 commits a false start and B1 commits a personal foul when he forcibly shoves A5 to the ground. Replays show that A2 caught the pass.

**Ruling:** The ruling of incomplete pass is not reviewable. A's ball, first-and-10 on B15. Although Team A's foul is disregarded as part of the 5-15 penalty enforcement, both teams committed a foul that prevented a snap, so neither team can challenge the previous play.

**PENALTY ENFORCEMENT AFTER REVERSAL**

**A.R. 15.268 Personal Foul/Unsportsmanlike Conduct enforcement**

First-and-10 on A30. QBA1 throws a low pass that is ruled intercepted by B2 at the A43-yard line. B2 returns the ball to the A10-yard line where he is tackled by the facemask by A3. Replays show that the ball hit the ground before B2 intercepted it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-25 on A15, reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. Pass is incomplete but the facemask penalty must be enforced. This applies to any personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul, and it is enforced as a dead ball penalty. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.269 Personal Foul/Unsportsmanlike Conduct enforcement with a double foul**

First-and-10 on A30. QBA1 throws a low pass that is ruled intercepted by B2 at the A43-yard line. B2 returns the ball to the A10-yard line. During the return, B4 blocked A5 low at the A23-yard line. Replays show that the ball hit the ground before B2 intercepted it. Team A was in an illegal formation at the snap.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball, first-and-10 on A45. Pass is incomplete, reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground and the low block must be enforced. It combines with the live ball illegal formation to create a 5-15 enforcement. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**A.R. 15.270 Penalty not enforced after reversal**

First-and-10 on A30. QBA1 throws a low pass that is ruled intercepted by B2 at the A43-yard line. B2 returns the ball to the A10-yard line and during his return B5 is called for an illegal block above the waist. Replays show that the ball hit the ground before B2 intercepted it.

**Ruling:** Reviewable. A's ball second-and-10 on A30, reset the clock to the time when the ball hit the ground. Only personal fouls or unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are enforced in this situation. Only the Replay Official can initiate a review of this play.

**REPLAY SYSTEM**

**A.R. 15.271 Loss of communication**

Second-and-10 on B30 with one minute remaining in the second quarter. QBA1 throws a pass to A3 at the B15 near the sideline and the pass is ruled incomplete. Replays show that the receiver had two feet in bounds with possession of the ball. The Replay Official initiates a review and as the Referee is coming over to the monitor, officials at the stadium lose communications with the League office.

**Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on B15. The Referee is to stay at the monitor for one minute while communications are being repaired. If communications are not restored in one minute, then the Referee will conduct the review with the Replay Official. If communications are repaired within the one-minute time frame, then the League office will review the play as customary.